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ABSTRACT

Essays in applied linguistics include: "Meaningful Negotiation: A Study of the Pedagogical Value of Autotutor-An Interactive Video Learning Resource" (John Stephen Byrne); "Medium of Instruction in the L2 Classróom" (Wei Danhua); "The Story of Language Contact and Shift in Ireland: How Unique, How Universal?" (Markku, Filppula); "Creating the Third Self: Pragmatic Transfer in Third Language Acquisition" (Robert J. Fouser); "Reading: Motivation Through Challenge" (Theo Harden); "A Native Bound-Morpheme Combines with Fully Nativised Borrowed Morphemes: A Highly Productive Language-Contact Feature in the Irish of Cape Clear" (Roibeard O hUrdail); "Teaching Irish to Americans: Focus on Feedback" (Thomas W. Ihde); "Syntactic Typology and the Problem with Choosing One Analysis" (Alan R. King); "Avoidance or Some Other Strategy: A Case for the Passive in Arabic and English" (Ghiath El Marzouk); "SLA Before ABC: Factors Facilitating Second Language Acquisition in Irish-Medium Playgroups" (Maire Mhic Mhathuna); "Academic Regulation of EFL in Ireland: Developments Since 1991" (Mary Ruane); "Second Languages in the Primary School: The Age Factor Dimension" (David Singleton); and "Some Issues Regarding Irish" (Patrick J. Wall). (MSE)

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TEANGA 15

The Irish Yearbook of Applied Linguistics

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Bliainiris na Teangeolaíochta Feidhmí in Éirinn
The Irish Yearbook of Applied Linguistics

EAGARTHÓIR/*EDITOR: Dónall P. Ó Baoill*

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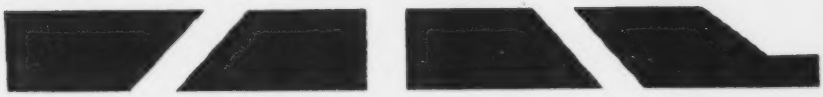

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Is eagrán speisialta é seo le ceiliúradh a dhéanamh ar IRAAL a bheith bunaithe 20 bliain agus guímid gach rath ar an eagraíocht sna blianta atá amach romhainn. Tá naoi n-alt san eagrán as na páipéir a tugadh ag Comhdháil 1994: **Language, Education and Society in a Changing World**. Fuair an Chomhdháil sin and an tEagrán seo tacaíocht áirithe ó Lingua faoi Ghníomh V(a). Tá dhá léacht a tugadh ag cruinnithe cinn bhliana IRAAL le cúpla bliain anuas san eagrán seo fosta. Gabhaimid ár mbuíochas le hInstitiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann as clóchur a dhéanamh ar an ábhar ar inneal barrdheasc. Cuirtear TEANGA a fhoilsítear gach bliain, TEANGLITIR a fhoilsítear faoi dhó sa bhliain agus foilseacháin AILA ar fáil do bhaill IRAAL. Le tuilleadh eolais a fháil faoi bhallraíocht IRAAL, scríobh chuig: An Rúnaí, IRAAL, f/ch ITÉ, 31 Plás Mhic Liam, Baile Átha Cliath 2.

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Introduction

This is a special issue to celebrate IRAAL's 20th anniversary and we wish the organisation well with its activities in the years ahead. Nine of the included articles were delivered at the 1994 Conference: **Language, Education and Society in a Changing World.** That Conference and this Volume were partly supported by Lingua under Action V(a) . Two of the lectures given at the organisation's recent AGMs are also included. We would like to extend our thanks to Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann for providing us with desktop and typesetting facilities.

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Meaningful Negotiation

A Study of the Pedagogical Value of Autotutor - an Interactive Video Learning Resource

John Stephen Byrne

INTRODUCTION

This paper reports on the results of an investigation into the pedagogical value of Autotutor, an Interactive video learning resource developed at Trinity College, Dublin. Its value is assessed on the basis of its ability to create an environment that promotes learner interaction in the L2. The author's own interests lie very much in examining the advantages and limitations with regard to language learning and computer technology. This paper may be of interest to academics, teachers and research students who are keen to explore and define the role that computer-based materials may have in the language learning process.

Six learners participated in this study consisting of three monolingual pairs, Japanese, Korean and Spanish respectively. The three pairs were filmed and recorded using the Business English programme "Meaningful Negotiation". The recordings were then transcribed in full and the length of utterances and length of pauses measured. This data became the basis for a description of the learners' interaction. I investigated the nature of conversational adjustments from a number of perspectives, quantity, quality, function in the context of the activity, learner preferences and L1 use.

We can summarise our findings as follows. Firstly, a study by Varonis and Gass (1983) demonstrated that arranging pair work between learners of different proficiency levels resulted in more negotiation of meaning than either native speaker-non-native speaker interactions or

interactions between learners of the same proficiency. The data seemed to support these earlier findings with regard to the quantity of interactional adjustments generated by "mixed-ability" groups when compared to "matched" pairs. Secondly, there is evidence to suggest that learners may prefer to use particular question types and that this is related to proficiency in the target language and the participant's role. Thirdly, the study does seem to support Rulon and McCreary's (1986) findings regarding participants' emphasis on the negotiation of content meaning rather than linguistic meaning during peer group discussion. Fourthly, employing analytic categories outlined by Swain (1983) regarding "comprehensible output" we should note that the "matched" pairs produced more "sustained" talk than the "mixed-ability" pair, although task design seems to be a crucial element if "sustained" talk is to occur. Next, the findings show that there is a near equal distribution of turns in both "matched" and "mixed" pairings. Finally, Autotutor seems to promote (or promote the possibility of) interactional adjustments and "sustained" talk which it is argued are important in language development.

This paper is divided into four sections. The first part attempts to set the context in which the study was undertaken. The second area investigates, briefly, recent research into the issues that arose from the findings. The third section reports on the findings. The final part offers some tentative conclusions regarding the value of computer-based training media.

THE CONTEXT

This paper reports on a research project undertaken at Trinity College, Dublin 1992-93. The author presents his findings based on an analysis of the interaction of three monolingual pairings, Japanese, Korean and Spanish respectively. The participants were all resident in Ireland in June 1993. They followed "Business English" courses. The Japanese and Spanish pairs were "matched" in terms of their level of proficiency (all advanced). The Korean pair were of mixed proficiency (intermediate & advanced). There were four females and two males. The Japanese pair consisted of two females, the Spanish and Korean pairs were mixed. Each pair visited Trinity College for one afternoon. They were presented with a one page written document which explained

the purpose of their visit (see appendix one). The three pairs were filmed and recorded using the Business English programme Meaningful Negotiation. No teacher/facilitator was present during the programme. The programme consisted of a five minute video. The video showed two businessmen negotiate with a third party to complete the purchase of a machine. The video was divided into six segments of approximately fifty seconds each. Each segment consisted of pre-viewing, while-viewing and post-viewing tasks and exercises. Each pair completed the set tasks in approximately 70 minutes.

The video recordings were then transcribed in full and the length of utterances and length of pauses measured. This data became the basis for a description of the learners' interaction. A summary of the learners' reactions to the feedback questionnaire is attached (see appendix two).

THE RELATED RESEARCH

The author draws upon a wide cross-section of research into language learning theory, group dynamics in conventional language learning settings such as the classroom and peer group learning and studies of the impact of course and task design on learner-to-learner interaction. Or to put it more clearly, he sought the answer to the following questions "What do "good" learners do to enable them to become more fluent in the target language?" "How do native speakers interact?" "Will the monolingual groups interact in the target language and does this interaction promote language learning"? He briefly outlines the research in these areas to date below.

WHAT IS L2 (TARGET LANGUAGE) KNOWLEDGE?

L2 knowledge, it is argued, consists of two dimensions, declarative and procedural knowledge. Procedural knowledge likewise has two aspects, one psychological, the other social. Firstly, procedural knowledge is made up of cognitive strategies/processes for learning the L2 and for using the L2. Secondly, it consists of social processes/strategies devised for managing interaction. (Ellis 1985:165)

Yule and Tarone (1991:162) have outlined 4 types of negotiated interactions which they list as follows, communication strategies, repair,

foreigner talk and conversational adjustments. They describe conversational adjustments as the search for clarification of meaning and confirmation of what has just been said. They state that analytic categories include clarification requests, confirmation checks and comprehension checks. (pp.167)

Their general conclusion is that under certain conditions learners do benefit from talking to other learners. Conditions which seem to be beneficial for an increased number of markers of negotiation are shared problem-solving tasks, multicultural groupings and mixed proficiency pairs (Yule and Tarone 1991:164). It is important, they argue, in this strand of research that focuses upon negotiated input to be able to clearly identify key moves of both partners in the negotiation of meaning. They conclude that negotiated input must not be just the result of moves by one speaker but the result of co-operative moves by both speakers (Yule and Tarone 1991:167). This study focused on the interaction of monolingual pairs as this is considered the context in which the programme Negotiate is most likely to operate.

HOW DO PEOPLE INTERACT?

It is clear that an understanding of three factors, setting, topic and the participants themselves, is vital in coming to an understanding of the nature of interaction. An investigation of turn-taking and its mechanisms will highlight, firstly, an underlying orderliness to interaction, secondly, the rights and duties of the participants and, thirdly, a means of identifying the expression of initiative, that is, the distribution of turns may be predetermined or locally managed. (Van Lier 1988:138) The most important point to consider here is the dynamic nature of interaction. Riley et al suggest a study of the illocutionary and interactive acts of the participant can be an index of role in interaction (Riley et al 1985:13).

The examination of participant interaction may give us some insights into Autotutor and enable us to describe this learning resource in relation to the general conversational and classroom turn-taking systems. However, interaction and turn-taking per se become fully relevant only in the context of topic. Interaction is partly organised for the purpose of raising issues to topical status, maintaining them and

changing direction. Van Lier (1988:149) defines topic as a sustained focusing of attention through the talk and across a stretch of talk on some single issue or set of closely related issues. The participants themselves will decide this. Topic is an interactionally negotiated issue. The process of negotiation is undertaken by the participants.

We can see an interface between topic and turn-taking and the direct relevance of turn-taking as a mechanism for overcoming problems of topic coherence. Where a speaker fails to make himself comprehensible, the operation of a repair system and "adjustment-in-interaction" comes into play. (Van Lier 1988:180) This can be linked to earlier observations regarding the role of conversational adjustments in the second language learning process and the notion that language use is language learning. This, as I have mentioned before, is the principal focus of this study of Autotutor as a potential learning resource.

IS THE AUTOTUTOR SETTING REALLY DIFFERENT?

With regard to Autotutor, the learning environment is transformed by the presence of "computer-as-teacher" while the lesson is in progress. The teacher as turn-keeper and turn-allocator is absent. The teacher as "live" modifier of input is also absent. The key difference that emerges is one of teacher as planner and teacher as local manager. Of course, the teacher still has a fundamental role as designer of the lesson and the lesson still has its primary pedagogical goal but the learners take the responsibility for the local management of the interaction. This is not a new role thrust upon learners, it is already a feature of much classroom interaction in the form of pair and group work.

IS TASK DESIGN AND GROUP WORK IMPORTANT?

The contexts in which meaning can be negotiated have been described by researchers who have found that "two-way tasks", in which two participants must share information in order to complete a task or solve a problem are effective in stimulating the development of communication skills. Such activities provide an environment for the development of fluency and the negotiation of meaning. They also stimulate learners to mobilise all their linguistic resources, and push their linguistic knowledge to the limit (Nunan 1988:84). Acquisition studies suggest that classroom communication can foster language

acquisition, particularly if learners are given opportunities for productive language use and the negotiation of meaning in small group work (Nunan 1988:87).

Group work and activities that promote the type of participant control that is a feature of the rule-set of general conversation may lead to the acquisition of skills in speaker change, interactional competence, and therefore to language development (Van Lier 1988:133).

I believe that Autotutor setting mirrors all the attributes that have been described above. The whole focus of this paper is based on the belief that receiving input is not enough but rather that there may need to be negotiation of meaning as well in order to make the incoming speech truly comprehensible (Cohen 1991:112). Most important and central is the interaction with others in meaningful activities (Van Lier 1988:93).

THE AUTOTUTOR PROGRAMME AND SETTING?

The principal features of the Autotutor programme can be described as follows;

TITLE.SCR	lists the linguistic and negotiating skill objectives for each set.
BACK.SCR	activity designed to activate schematic knowledge.
FOCUS.SCR	focused listening task.
SEGMENT	view video.
TASK.SCR	problem-solving task.
REPEAT.SCR	feedback screen.
FINAL.SCR	feedback screen.
TEST.SCR	problem-solving task.
TESTA.SCR	feedback screen.

Ellis argues that the nature of the task undoubtedly impacts upon the level of difficulty of that activity. He distinguishes between "here-and-now" activities and "displaced" activities (Ellis 1985:141). We may surmise that if the task is a displaced activity, there is a greater need on the part of the learners for more questioning behaviour to confirm and clarify understanding. Of course, in the case of monolingual groups, there is the possibility that they will negotiate meaning in the L1.

Learning style or preference may very well play an important part in the learners' commitment to regarding Autotutor as a serious learning resource. As Nunan (1988:6) reports, methodology, which includes learning activities and materials, is generally the area where the greatest potential for conflict between the teacher and the learner lies. The learner seems to have rather fixed ideas about what it is to be a learner (role) and what it is to learn a language (method) (Nunan 1988:94).

THE FINDINGS

What did the learners do?

Table 1 shows learner behaviours as a percentage (%) based on time taken to complete the "Negotiate" programme. The average time taken was 70 minutes but there wasn't a wide variation in the time taken to complete the learning programme (approx. 6 mins between the fastest and slowest groups).

TABLE 1.

Behaviours Found	**Grouping**		
	Japan	**Spain**	**Korea**
Silent reading	21.6	32.2	7.2
Reading aloud	4.5	3	17.4
Pauses	16.5	14	22.9
Dictionary	5.5	0	0
Mother tongue	4.7	0	9.2
Note-taking	3.3	2.7	1
Viewing	22.2	22.1	24.3
Quoting	4.5	3	10
Interaction in TL	14	22.5	8

EXPLANATION OF TERMS

Silent reading refers to the times when learners read the screen in silence. Reading aloud refers to times when learners read directly off the screen. Quoting refers to references made by learners to text on the screen within an interaction slot. Interaction in TL refers to all verbal behaviour, excluding reading aloud, quoting and L1 use. Pauses refers to all periods of silence excluding silent reading, note-taking, searching through a dictionary and viewing the video material, essentially, silences within an interaction slot. Dictionary use refers to silent behaviour which includes time serching for a lexical item and the silent reading of the definition. Mother Tongue refers to the use of the learner's first language. In this context, this means Japanese, Korean and Spanish. Note-taking refers to any writing which includes taking

notes, recording scores, etc. Viewing refers to the learner watching the authentic video material.

"TALKING AND TELLING"

Essentially, these behaviours can be classified into two categories. The first is *"Talking"*. This refers to all learner interaction including L1, *"quoting"*, and target language use. It incorporates pauses as this is a feature of talk. The second is *"Telling"*. This refers to all information transmitted from the screen and video segments. Three behaviours are manifested here: a) learners read the screen silently, b) a learner self-selects and reads aloud, and c) learners listen to video segments. Telling is a feature of all Autotutor's screens and segments.

WHAT ARE THE LEARNERS FIRST REACTIONS TO SEEING A SCREEN?

Not surprisingly, they read them, what is surprising perhaps is that they sometimes read them aloud. We have identified feedback screens in particular to be associated with this phenomenon. Reading aloud and quoting stem from the same source, that is, Autotutor. However, they serve very different functions. The former, it seems, serves to "tell" the other participant what they have to do. It may reflect the status of the participants. It may also have a psycholinguistic function and aid the working memory in processing the information on the screen. The latter behaviour, it appears, enables the learner to both construct and manage the discourse topic. It may also aid the learner in maintaining his/her turn while planning ahead for the next utterance. The extent of this behaviour may be related to the nature of the task.

QUESTIONING BEHAVIOUR

By focusing on the questioning behaviour of each participant we may gain some insights into the dynamics of the interaction, in relation to the quality of the language employed, the status of the participants, the functional use of the L1, the difficulty of the task, the extent of conversational adjustments, the learners' individual learning styles and the significance of their cultural background.

THE FIRST FINDING

Arranging pair work between learners of different proficiency

The first finding related to the quantity of questions per pair. This superficial look at questioning behaviour seems to confirm the study by Varonis and Gass (1983) that there are advantages in arranging pair work between learners of different proficiency levels, that such unequal dyads result in more negotiation of meaning than either native speaker/non-native speaker or interactions between learners of the same proficiency level (Nunan 1988:83).

HOW MANY QUESTIONS WERE ASKED?

The following shows the total number of questions asked by each pairing:

Korean	Japanese	Spanish
163	143	101

THE SECOND FINDING

Who asked the questions? Did one learner dominate?

The second finding that we can quickly identify is related to the source of the question.

	Japanese	Spanish	Korean
Speaker A	52.5%	48%	55%
Speaker B	47.5%	53%	45%

We can see that there is a fairly equal distribution of questioning behaviour among the three pairs. It appears that the optimum condition for negotiated input referred to by Yule and Tarone (1991) earlier are satisfied in that in all cases both parties are making cooperative moves to negotiate meaning.

THE THIRD FINDING

What kinds of questions were they asking each other?
I sought to investigate questioning behaviour from the perspective of its function. Each question was identified for its purpose. This can give us an index of illocutionary acts. In particular we are interested in identifying questioning behaviour as an indication of the extent of negotiation of meaning. The following categories emerged from the data.

(A) **Procedural** inquiry. There are two types of procedural inquiry, one which refers to questions that signal an end of an activity and the readiness of the participant to move to the next screen and the second which refers to questions that relate an Autotutor elicit. Questions are of a "what do we do now?" nature. Autotutor elicited certain behaviours such as "Press any key", "Discuss with your partner" etc. (B) **Code** inquiry refers to questions asked about the meanings of lexical items used by other learners or Autotutor. (C). Questions that represent **interactional** uses of language, that is, questions where the primary focus is social. Richards (1990) states "interactional uses of language are those in which the primary purpose for communication is social. The emphasis is on creating harmonious relations between participants rather than on communicating information" (p 54). (D) **Transactional** inquiry which Richards defines as language used primarily for communicating information. It is message orientated. Language in its transactional functions is needed to acquire new skills, assimilate new information and construct new concepts (p 56).

% of questions asked by type

	Transactional	**Procedural**	**Code**
Learner 1	60	20	17
Learner 2	70	20.5	4.5
Learner 3	66	21	10.5
Learner 4	62	30	5.5
Learner 5	80	9	11
Learner 6	55	37	8

THE FOURTH FINDING

How important are comprehension checks, confirmation checks and clarification requests?

Chaudron (1988:131) argues that comprehension checks, confirmation checks and clarification requests should contribute to an index of the interaction/negotiation of the classroom. As a result, the data seems to confirm the findings of Rulon and McCreary (1986), who distinguished between negotiation of linguistic meaning and negotiation of content meaning and argue that peer groups produce significantly more confirmation and clarification checks in regard to lesson content. They conclude that enhancing negotiation of content by using peer group discussion may be the best way to promote interaction and subsequently TL acquisition (Chaudron 1988;108).

Table 2. The Questioning behaviour of the six participants as %

Subj.	Tran			Proc			Code		
	clar	Conf	Comp	clar	Conf	Comp	clar	Conf	Comp
1	37	32	11	13	60	7	84	16	0
2	17	33	19	44	31	6	33	33	33
3	16	42	19	50	50	0	80	0	20
4	33	33	21	12	44	6	0	0	100
5	18	42	24	25	25	25	0	0	100
6	70	20	8	22	67	11	83	0	17

Note: Figures do not include open/closed type questions

A closer examination of these question types in the data appears to indicate that the learners prefer to use particular question types and that this may be related to proficiency. Using a range of question types signals a variety of turn-taking initiatives on the part of the learner. Clarification requests, comprehension and confirmation checks. It is believed that the types of turn described above are key features of interaction which promotes the acquisition of skills in speaker change, interactional competence and therefore to language development (Van Lier 1988:133).

THE FIFTH FINDING

Does Autotutor promote "sustained" interaction?

Finally, we can say that Autotutor can promote "sustained" interaction (as defined by Swain (1991) between participants. Question length. This refers to the length of the question measured according to the criteria set by Swain (1983). She argues that length of student talk is a key factor in second language development. Swain affirms "opportunities to produce sustained output in the second language are crucial to the S.L. learning process. Sustained talk provides the opportunities for variety and complexity of language use and it forces the learner to pay attention to how content is expressed". (p237.) She outlines four categories. 1) *Minimal* which consists of a turn one/two words in length. 2) *Phrase* which is a turn consisting of an adverbial phrase, nominal or verb phrase. 3) *Clause* which is a turn consisting of one clause. 4) *Sustained* which is a turn longer than a clause (p 237). She argues that "language production will have to be at more than phrase or clause level if the learner is to learn the mechanism for coherent and accurate discourse" (Swain 1983:241). We noted earlier that our mixed ability group registered the highest number of conversational adjustments, here we can find that our "matched" pairs, that is, pairs of a similar proficiency produce more "sustained" talk.

I have to admit to having my doubts about Swain's hypothesis regarding output. These doubts are based on our understanding of the spoken features of language. Underwood (1989) summarises Brown & Yule's findings regarding the differences between spoken/written discourse. Spoken language is syntactically simpler, uses incomplete sentences, less specific vocabulary interactive expressions and is less densely packaged (p 12). Of course, certain types of tasks could promote the type of sustained talk suggested by Swain. Duff (1986) reports that the nature of the task will influence the nature of the output. He distinguishes between divergent tasks e.g. a debate and convergent tasks e.g. problem solving activity. The former produces more words per turn while the latter produces more turns. Swain's argument for "sustained" output measured in terms of utterance length doesn't seem to take account of different styles of speaking. Richards (1990) reports that different styles of speaking reflect the roles, age, sex and status of the

participants in interactions. Secondly, it doesn't seem to take into account the constraints of different activity types.

Table 3

% of questions/response based on Swain's categorisations

Question length	**Japanese**	**Spanish**	**Korean**
minimal	25	26	51
phrase	13	19	11
clause	53	51	36
sustained	7	5	5
Response length			
minimal	39	35	51
phrase	6	16	7
clause	23	15	12
sustained	8	24	1

CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, I have sought to describe and examine the constraints of Autotutor in the context of previous studies of natural and classroom learning environments. My description and examination is based on my observations of the learners' interaction. Describing the interaction, however, while interesting in itself, does not indicate if learning (or the opportunity for learning) is taking place. For this reason, I investigated the nature of conversational adjustments from a number of perspectives, quantity, quality, function in the context of the activity, learner preferences and L1 use.

I can summarise the findings as follows. Firstly, the data seemed to support the findings of Varonis and Gass (1983) with regard to the quantity of interactional adjustments generated by "mixed-ability" groups when compared to "matched" pairs. Secondly, the evidence here appears to point to factors such as the nature of the task and the participants' roles as playing a significant part in the development of

interaction. The level of Proficiency appears to play a part in deciding the role of the participant. The "dominant" party would seem to take the major responsibility for the negotiation of meaning. There is insufficient evidence to speculate on the impact of learner preferences in the use of conversational adjustments. It has been argued that interactional adjustments may promote language development. Thirdly, the study does seem to support Rulon and McCreary' (1986) findings regarding participants emphasis on the negotiation of content rather than linguistic meaning. Fourthly, we should note that the "matched" pairs produced more "sustained" talk, although task design seems to be a crucial element if "sustained" talk is to occur. It has been argued that "sustained" talk could aid language development. Finally, Autotutor seems to promote (or promote the possibility of) interactional adjustments, which it is argued are important in language development.

APPENDIX 1

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE LEARNER

Autotutor 2 is an interactive video programme. It combines computer technology and video to help you learn new languages.

Today you are going to watch a business negotiation in English. Exercises have been prepared for you to help you understand the video. The computer will guide you through these exercises.

You don't need any computer skills. There are only 3 simple instructions.

* PRESS ANY KEY TO CONTINUE
* PRESS C TO CONTINUE
* PRESS 1 2 or 3

This video has been divided into 6 parts.

a. company information
b. pre-negotiation
c. exploring positions
d. opening gambits
e. bargaining
f. closing of the negotiation

SCORING; As you watch the video, you will be given a TASK to do. After you have completed the task, you will be given a score. Mark this score on your score sheet.

At the end of each part, there is a little TEST. Again, having completed this test, you will receive a score. Mark this score on your score sheet.

Good Luck!

APPENDIX 2

The learners were asked to complete a feedback form upon completing the learning programme.

We can briefly summarise the learners opinions. The title screens and the feedback screens appear to be very warmly received. Likewise the test screens seem to arouse a positive response. Learners were less positive about the back and focus screens. The data suggests that at times the learners found the screens less clear and helpful than other screens. If this was the case we might anticipate more negotiation of meaning as the learners sought to comprehend the demands of the task. In fact back screen elicited a significant number of interactional adjustments, I suspect this had much to do with the level of difficulty of the task. The task screens are not considered to be overly difficult and more importantly relatively clear. In all cases the learners state they had sufficient time. Of course, this is a feature of all computer learning programmes.

In most cases the learners had little experience of using computers in work/ school/home environments. Likewise they had little experience of formal negotiating procedures. Finally, the participants had limited exposure to Interactive Video systems.

Overall, this Interactive Video programme seemed to elicit a favourable response. The participants regard the programme as clear and interesting. Time is sufficient. The response to the level of difficulty is mixed.

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Medium of Instruction in the L2 Classroom

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I Introduction

There are different opinions about the use of the native language in the classroom. Some teachers forbid its use, some call on it to occasionally facilitate understanding, and some use it as the usual vehicle for clarifying the meaning. This paper aims to discuss the medium of instruction in the L2 classroom for Chinese adolescent learners. In investigating the use of L1 in the classroom, two aspects should be taken into account: psychological consideration and contrastive linguistics. The discussion in this paper will focus on the psycholinguistic differences.

II The Role of Language Medium in the Acquisition of Concepts

The role of language in thought has been long debated. There are currently two opposing views relating to the degree of dependence of thought upon language, one argues for the independence of thought and language and the other for the dependence of thought upon language. The problem is difficult to resolve because it is impossible to extricate a concept from the words in which it is expressed. However, L2 learning enables us to test concept attainment.

English and Chinese belong to different language families. When we are considering the teaching of English to speakers of other languages, especially Chinese, which is quite different from the English language,

the impact of the mother tongue upon the acquisition of the target language must always be taken into account. What then are the likely areas of conflict between the two languages? We must certainly not forget the differences in domains of grammar, rhetoric, semantics and pragmatics, which play a very important role with respect to acquisition. However, what I want to consider mostly is the role of language in thought.

In order to make this clearer, we suppose that the process of language production is on a time axis as recommended by McNell's (1987). According to McNell, the speaking time, when words are spoken or written down, is surface time, and the preceding time interval, that is the time of thinking and transformation is deep time. Transformation here refers to the process in which the speaker transforms thinking, which is global and imagistic, into speech, which is segmented and syntactic. In a way, it may be stated that this transformation links two different kinds of thinking, the global and imagistic thinking and the segmented linguistic thinking. The former is closely related to the real world, or to the environment while the latter is closely related to language, which is governed by both rules of grammar and principles of pragmatics. Thus, the language producing process will be as follows:

1. On the part of the speaker, it begins in deep time with transformation from the global and imagistic thinking to the segmented linguistic thinking, and then to the surface time, the production of underlined parole, in which the speaker's ideas become overt in terms of sense and force as expressed by the signifier, speech.

2. On the hearer's side, the opposite happens in the form of decoding: the parole is transformed back into the global and imagistic information in terms of the conversational implications.

3. The process of transformation, or linguistic thinking, is shaped by language, in that the speaker has to reorganise his global and imagistic thinking in terms of the signifiers as they are conventionally constituted within the community of speakers who speak the language. Therefore, while the linguistic communication itself is individual and motivated and controlled by the individual

speaker, there must be something that is common to or shared by the community of speakers.

4. As language is usually acquired from childhood, and is conventional among the community of speakers, it will produce a king of linguistic routine in relation to the rules of grammar and principles of pragmatics. This linguistic routine may be identified with psycholinguistic patterns which underlie language performance in the following ways: 1) the way the target is segmented, and labelled 2) the way the segmented items are sequenced 3) the way the sequences are related to the communicative goals.

5. These psycholinguistic patterns are consistent within the community of speakers who speak the language and they work subconsciously rather than consciously. However, when we take the case of an individual speaker into consideration, his/her behaviour may not necessarily be entirely consistent with the whole set of conventions within or pertaining to the language, as there are determined by the rules of grammar and principles of pragmatics, but only with some of these convention which may even be altered.

So what happens to Chinese learners when they learn English as a second language? The fact is that, on the one hand, if they wish to communicate a concept for which they have a direct label, they can take advantage of the label to construct a direct representation. On the other hand, if they wish to communicate a concept for which they haven't got a direct label, they will have top translate the intended concept into a description composed of Chinese communication concepts. For example, English speakers make use of the subjunctive mood to express a counterfactual event, whereas, Chinese does not have a subjunctive mood. Thus, in a situation in which it is known that Mr. Chang has no car, the Chinese speaker is likely to say "If Mr. Chang has a car, he can visit us." instead of "If Mr. Chang had a car, he could visit us." This indicates that if a language has a specific label for a given concept, the hearer or reader's intended concept as a cognitive perspective is effectively assured whereas if the label is not available, the hearer and reader must rely on other cognitive perspectives and move towards the intended one. This agrees with Bloom's (1986) hypothesis which is

stated as follows: "As a consequence, one might expect that he or she might, on the road to arriving at the intended concept, A) tend to draw upon considerations which a direct triggering of the concept would act to preclude and B) be more vulnerable to distractions which may even derail him/her from the intended result."

We can see that the relation between words and thought is not only considered as signified/signifier but a cognitive activity as well. In addition, in the L2 situation the learners use L1 for a reference, and to that extent they tend to transfer rules, habits and meaning from their mother tongue. Therefore, in order to reduce the impact of the mother tongue upon L2 learning, the use of the target language for instruction in the L2 classroom is very important. The activities performed in the target language in classroom will create or stimulate an L2 environment. They encourage the learners to think in the second language and avoid the learners relying too much on L1 support, so that the learners will develop a new independent network of L2 verbal connections.

III PSYCHOLINGUISTIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ENGLISH AND CHINESE

Now, in a bilingual situation, especially in foreign language learning, the learner may not have completely mastered the language system he is using, and he is by no means in possession of the psycholinguistic patterns to guide him subconsciously. Instead he may simply follow the pattern he is familiar with, but he may never become aware of that, except to the extent that he often may find himself embarrassed by the wrong utterances he/she produces. Clearly, this indicates that learning a language means not only the acquisition of a complete system of linguistic symbols, and the rules of grammar and the principles of pragmatics, but also the acquisition of certain habits, that is the psycholinguistic pattern that underlies the language. This may also help explain the fact that many Chinese people speak English with strong Chinese characteristics and modes of behavior, that is, they subconsciously replace the signifier of the English language with that of the Chinese language. In doing this, they produce mistakes at the level of grammar, or even when they do compose a correct sentence in terms of syntax or semantics, they may still make mistakes in rhetoric.

As to the question of whether this kind of difference really exists, it may be stated that Chinese treats everything with a broad view and within a broader content, whereas English treats everything as strictly labelled and logically related, as compared with Chinese. This certainly does not mean that Chinese lacks logic, in view of the fact that it has fostered a cultural heritage of unmatched beauty and unique richness, but it is different in a way from that of English. A few examples will suffice to show what I have in mind.

First, at the level of the categorisation, or the form of the noun phrase, English employs a parameter boundary by using the indefinite article *a* or *an*. It can be shown in the contrast between a series of NPs with *a/an* and another with zero, e.g. *a desk, a tree, a story* in contrast to *water, iron, information* and so on. Here we can see two different structures: *a/an + N* and *O + N*, and we can see from the series above that the signifier of the words that can be said with *a/an*, has one thing in common, that they all have a kind of boundary, i.e. a definite shape, beginning and end, length and all kinds of limits that make a countable noun. Whereas, those that do not have *a/an*, are all signifiers of something that is not concrete in itself. They usually require other means to make them concrete, e.g. a piece of iron and a piece of information.

Now let us consider the case in Chinese. Certainly, there is no concrete system of determiners in the Chinese language. Although Chinese can also say *Yi kuai* tie "a piece of iron" and *Yi tiao xiaoxi* "a piece of information" and so on, they do not make any contrast between them and expressions such as *Yi ge gushi* "a story", *Yi tiao yu* "a fish", and so on.

Because of the contrast made by the parameter of boundary, English is able to separate such ideas in such phrases or expressions as *a work*, which means a concrete object, the product of the work of a writer or an author, and *He is at table*, which indicates something related to the sense of a table but not referred to the table. Certainly, this is impossible in Chinese, as there is never any requirement when naming something to consider whether it has or has not a boundary.

Secondly, there is a clear division between nouns, adjectives and adverbs when they are used as modifiers or productively in English. This, too, creates a division in the linguistic thinking that is related to different facets of sense/meaning related to the same object, for example, the contrast between *happy* and *happiness*, and so on. In Chinese, there is no simple form that can make a distinction between the state of being happy, which can be observed, and happiness, which can only be perceived through reasoning. That is to say, there is no distinction between the noun and adjective form in Chinese.

The last example I want to present here is about the Topic and Information sequence which can be clearly seen in discourse analysis. That is, when producing a sentence/an utterance, in English, one will probably utter a group of sound images which signifies the topic in question, and then state the information one wants to provide on the topic. This is most clearly seen in the case of a passive construction, i.e. one may say *The boy broke the glass*, or *The glass was broken by the boy*. The difference between these two sentences is that the topics in question are different, the former is concentrated on the boy while the latter is concentrated on the glass. This is also not a distinction usually made in Chinese.

Let's bear in mind that the learners in this case are Chinese adolescents who have missed out on 'the golden period' of early childhood for acquiring English. From what has been said so far it can't be denied that they learn English from a Chinese viewpoint and, therefore, whether they like or not, they learn English on the basis of Chinese. Meanwhile, they approach the study of a new society with a different culture and they have to think of ways in which they will personally deal with the Chinese-English connection. Thus, when the explanation and definition given in the target language fails to make the learners understand various concepts, the mother tongue can he employed as a medium of instruction in the L2 classroom, which will give support to learners in their attempts to achieve better comprehension.

IV CONCLUSION

We have discussed the role of language in thought and the psycholinguistic differences between English and Chinese. English and

Chinese differ in many respects. If proficiency is the goal of language teaching, then, the learners will improve their ability to master the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing or if communicative competence is the goal they will concentrate on improving their intralingual or crosslingual skills?

The intralingual activities of the language classroom create or simulate an L2 environment. They encourage learners' thinking in the second language. Intralingual techniques clearly provide opportunities for proficiency development. However, this does not mean that crosslingual procedures at all times are unhelpful in achieving an intralingual proficiency objective. As we have seen above, the learner inevitably works from an L1 reference base, but it can be helpful for him to adjust himself in the L2 through the medium of L1.

As for the medium of instruction in the L2 classroom, in the present case (Chinese learners), the mother tongue may be employed in the presentation of the teaching syllabus, especially for the adolescents and in cases of difficult items where complicated psychólinguistic processes are at work which are so very different from one language to the other. The reason is that after all the learner will use his own pattern in interpreting the item that is exotic to him, so that mistakes may be avoided if there is a better chance of being clearly understood.

However, the use of the mother tongue must be somewhat restricted, so that learners will concentrate their attention on the target language, so that they will only use their mother tongue as a bridge in acquiring the target language, not as a substitute or an equivalent to the signifiers of the target language. It is difficult to recreate the real-world in the classroom, but it is extremely important to at least create a language environment so as to help the learners to improve the four skills. Thus, teachers (non-native speakers) are encouraged to use the target language as much as possible as a medium of instruction in L2 classroom.

Of course, both teachers (non-native speakers) and learners will make mistakes when they communicate with one another in the target language. There is nothing strange about this within the context/process of language learning. The non-native teachers should have confidence

in using the target language as much as possible as a medium of instruction. As Little (1985) suggests,

> First, teachers are often more competent in the target language than they think; and daily practice can only increase their competence. Secondly, it is infinitely more important to maximum learners' receptive and productive use of the target language than to protect them from deficiencies in the teacher's competence in that language. Thirdly, communicative learning materials and activities should be anchored in a large corpus of authentic texts in the target language, and these texts will more than counterbalance any adverse effects that deficiencies in the teacher's target language competence may have. (p.26)

To sum up, the use of the target language as a medium of instruction in the L2 classroom is an efficient way to achieve proficiency in the target language. Because of the psycholinguistic differences between English and Chinese, the sole use of the target language as a medium of instruction is not always feasible. Hence, the mother tongue can be employed in the L2 classroom. But the use of the mother tongue as a medium of instruction must be strictly controlled, so that the learners will concentrate their attention on the target language and rely less on L1 support. The proper use of L2 and L1 as the medium of instruction in L2 classroom will certainly make the teaching of second language more effective.

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The Story of Language Contact and Shift in Ireland: How Unique, How Universal?

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1. INTRODUCTION

There has been a noticeable revival of interest in language-contact studies in recent years. One of the reasons for this has been the accumulation and increasing availability of evidence from numerous 'contact vernaculars' (such as creoles, for example) which has shown that there are a lot of shared features between contact situations and their linguistic outcomes even in widely differing geographical and linguistic settings. Another factor has been no doubt the practical importance of language-contact studies for other fields of inquiry such as language learning and acquisition, language education and language planning, especially in ethnically and socially mixed communities. At the same time, and probably as a result of the fresh interest in these questions, we have witnessed the emergence of new theories and models of language contact which have raised its theoretical attractiveness.

This paper seeks to capture some of the essential characteristics of the linguistic situation in Ireland over the last few centuries, starting from the rise of the Irish dialects of English with their special features, and extending to the present day. Language-contact and language-shift in Ireland will be viewed against the background of general models of language contact and language acquisition in conditions of language contact and shift, and an attempt made to differentiate 'universal'

features from those which are specific or peculiar to the Irish contact situation.

2. The emergence of Hiberno-English dialects

The circumstances in which large numbers of Irish-speakers set out to learn English from the seventeenth century onwards can in general terms be described or characterised as *second-language acquisition in an overwhelmingly 'naturalistic' setting* (Guilfoyle 1986:127; Odlin 1994:142 f.). Bliss (1977:16-17) provides the following description of the type of situation in which Irish-speakers were at this period:

> One fact is of vital importance for the history of Anglo-Irish dialects: the Irishman learning English had no opportunity of learning it from speakers of standard English.[...].
>
> Irishmen learning English, therefore, had to rely on teachers of their own race, whose own English was very different from standard English, so that there was nothing to check the progressive influence of the Irish language. In each generation the speech of the teachers was already strongly influenced by Irish, the speech of the learners even more so.

The general lack of schooling is also indirectly confirmed by statistics on the development of *bilingualism and literacy* in Ireland. On the basis of the 1851 census and its estimates for numbers of bilingual and literate persons, Odlin (1994) has calculated the numbers of *illiterate bilinguals* in the baronies of County Galway in the west of Ireland. According to his results, illiterate bilinguals clearly outnumbered literate bilinguals at that date: the average percentage of illiterate bilinguals in Co. Galway turns out to be as high as 61.16% (note that in three baronies there were too few Irish-speakers to allow estimation of the number of illiterate bilinguals; for further details, see Odlin 1994). This, Odlin argues, provides strong evidence against the view held by some scholars that schools were somehow instrumental in the transmission of English among the Irish-speaking population; Odlin's conclusion is that the acquisition of English was primarily naturalistic and took place with little or no help from schools (1994:144).

In the seventeenth century, the formation period of most dialects of Hiberno-English, most of the population was still Irish-speaking and monolingual. According to authorities on this subject, the situation remained relatively stable even throughout the eighteenth century: thus, de Fréine (1977:73) states that the relationships between the two competing languages at the end of the eighteenth century were geographically very similar to what they had been in the year 1700. Two of the provinces, Connaught and Munster, were still almost entirely Irish-speaking. English had made most inroads into the eastern and north-eastern parts, especially into the counties of Dublin, Wicklow, Kildare, Carlow and South Wexford, and into the province of Ulster. Not surprisingly, English had become dominant in the big towns. There are no official censuses from this period, but Hindley (1990) has reconstructed the language situation at about 1800 on the basis of various literary sources and the later censuses conducted in 1851, 1881, and 1911. His results are shown on Map 1 in the Appendix.

After the turn of the century, the rate and extent of language shift increased dramatically. The first official census, that of 1851, reveals that a massive change in the linguistic situation had already taken place: for instance, while in 1800 some two million out of the total population of five million in Ireland were still monoglot speakers of Irish, the figure for 1851 had dropped to just over 300,000, i.e. down to some 5 per cent from the 40 per cent in 1800 (for details, see de Fréine 1977:80 f.; Hindley 1990:13 ff.)[2]. These figures indicate, of course, that *bilingualism* had become very wide-spread, and also, that the process of language shift had begun on a large scale.

The language map for the year 1851 (from Ó Cuív 1969), given in the Appendix (Map 2), looks very different from that of 1800: Irish has already receded from central Ireland to the west and south-west, the strongest bastions being in Counties Galway, Mayo, Clare, and Kerry. Since 1851, the 'flight from Irish' continued at about the same pace, and by the next census of 1891, the number of monoglot speakers of Irish had declined from over 300,000 to about only 38,000 (see, e.g. Gregor 1980:274), and the total of those who had been returned as Irish-speakers (whether monoglot or bilingual) also had dropped to a little over half a million (Ó Cuív 1969:129). The present-day situation is well-known:

there are no monoglot speakers, and the number of those who use Irish as their habitual medium of communication is now estimated in terms of thousands rather than of tens of thousands (see, e.g. Hindley 1990:251).

3. General characteristics of Hiberno-English

As already mentioned, the lack of formal instruction and the lack of competent teachers are among the major factors which influenced the nature of the emerging contact variety, Irish English or Hiberno-English (HE), the cover term often used for the Irish dialects of English. Bliss (1984:150) provides the following general linguistic characterisation of the southern dialects of HE:

> In the pronunciation and vocabulary of southern Hiberno-English it is possible to trace the influence both of older strata of the English language and of the Irish language; in grammar, syntax and idiom the peculiarities of southern Hiberno-English depend exclusively on the Irish language. Even in the parts of Ireland where Irish has long been extinct its unconscious influence still controls the usage of speakers of English.

Bliss's description points out the two main sources of HE phonology, grammar and lexicon, viz. earlier English and the Irish language, with special emphasis on the latter as regards the distinctive features of HE syntax and 'idiom'. An essentially similar view is held by many other writers on the subject, e.g. by Henry (1977), although he reserves the term 'Hiberno-English' for that variety of English which was brought to Ireland by English settlers in the seventeenth century. Henry's term for the characteristically rural varieties of Irish English is Anglo-Irish, by which he means "language forming on the same base as corresponding Irish structures, with native intonation and pronunciation and a foraging for English materials" (1977: 20).

The linguistic characteristics of HE and their origins have been a matter of some controversy in the most recent research, and many scholars have questioned Bliss's and Henry's 'traditional' view on the primacy of the Irish substratal input to HE. For example, some of the well-known peculiarities of the HE tense and aspect system were earlier explained as

Irishisms but are now considered by many to have equally plausible sources in Early Modern English (for a discussion of the HE perfect forms, see, e.g. Harris 1984; of the cooccurrence of *do* and *be*, e.g. Kallen 1986). There are even those who estimate the overall impact of Irish on HE to be very minimal. Thus, Lass (1990: 148), who discusses selective phonological features of HE, arrives at the following conclusion:

> ...we can define it [southern Hiberno-English], not as a 'contact-English' in any important sense (regardless of the fact that it began as a second-language variety), but as a perfectly normal first-language, internally evolved variety, with only marginal contact effects. And, as it happens, a phonologically very conservative one, whose particular archaisms form a clearly recognisable subset of the most salient features of seventeenth-century southern Mainland English.

It may turn out to be impossible to find consensus on the exact degree of influence from the substrate, on the one hand, and the superstrate, on the other. However, there is a lot of evidence which confirms the significant contribution of Irish to HE phonology, syntax, and lexicon. For instance, my own studies in HE syntax have indicated that Irish-derived features are most frequent in those areas of Ireland where Irish still retains some positions, or is still remembered within 'living memory'. To mention but one example, the preposition *with* is used in the west of Ireland in contexts such as (1) and (2), where only a temporal reading is possible:[3]

(1) He was the chief of the police...he's dead *with* long, he was nearly ninety years when he died. (Kerry: D.B.)

(2) I wasn't at a dance *with* a long time. (Clare: C.O'B.)

The temporal meaning of *with* in HE constitutes a clear *calque* on the corresponding Irish construction involving the preposition *le*. Why it has been transferred to HE is explained by the fact that *le* in Irish has two meanings: temporal 'for the duration of' and instrumental 'with'. Both meanings, evidently, are reproduced by *with* in HE.

A similar 'dialect continuum' with respect to Irish influence can be documented for some other features of HE syntax, too. These include, e.g., the so-called cleft sentences and the use of the conjunction *and* as a subordinator, which are exemplified by (3) and (4) below (for further discussion, see Filppula 1991; Odlin 1992):

(3) Ah, very little's [very few farmers] give up farming round this area. *It's looking for more land a lot of them are.* (Wicklow: J.N.)

(4) He said you could hear them [strange noises] yet, inside in his own house late at night *and he in bed.* (Clare: M.R.)

Besides the observed regional stratification, the role of the Irish substrate is also confirmed by independent evidence from other contact situations between English and the Celtic languages. For example, several studies have demonstrated that the variety of English spoken in the Hebrides exhibits syntactic features which are strikingly similar to those met in HE. Sabban (1982) notes parallels between the tense and aspect systems of Hebridean English and Hiberno-English; Shuken (1984:155) points out the possibility of Gaelic influence on the use of clefting and of the definite article in contexts where other dialects would not have it; and Odlin (1992:190) cites examples of subordinating *and* recorded from a bilingual speaker, who was born and reared on one of the islands of the Inner Hebrides. Yet the external circumstances and the dates at which English was brought to the Hebrides were very different from those in Ireland: in the Inner Hebrides English did not become the dominant language until the nineteenth century, and in the Outer Hebrides Scottish Gaelic still survives alongside English in many communities (Shuken 1984; Odlin 1992). Furthermore, in the Hebridean setting schools played a more important role in spreading English than they did in Ireland. However, English did not achieve a firm position as a medium of education until the mid-nineteenth century, and when it eventually happened, the teachers were likely to have been speakers of educated Scottish Standard English, or Highlanders and Islanders who had been educated in the Lowlands by various religious societies (Clement 1980: 14; Shuken 1984: 153). This

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means that the Gaelic speakers in the Hebrides were exposed to forms of English which must have been considerably different from those in the Irish context, and more particularly, that the role of diffusion from earlier, and especially southern, varieties of English must have been significantly smaller than in Ireland. For these reasons, and taking also into account the close similarity between the substrate languages, Hebridean English is a useful point of comparison for HE, providing important indirect evidence of the substratal influence of Irish on at least some of the typical HE constructions.

Other types of linguistic evidence are also available to support the substratum view. We need one mention that HE uses syntactic constructions which are not attested in other dialects of English. A well-known example is the so-called *after* perfect, as in (5). This is evidently a calque on the corresponding Irish pattern.

(5) *They're after building* a big block of offices here in Tralee. (Kerry: G.W.)

In conclusion, the Irish input to HE vernacular is far from negligible even in syntax, which is generally held to be more resistant to contact influences than phonology or lexicon, and although several controversial issues await further study, it seems justified to consider HE a kind of contact vernacular. The next question is: to what extent is HE comparable to other contact vernaculars, including creoles?

4. HIBERNO-ENGLISH VS. CREOLES AND OTHER CONTACT VERNACULARS

On the basis of the social circumstances surrounding the language contact and shift in Ireland during the 17th century and onwards, the genesis of the Irish dialects of English resembles that of creoles. Some writers have, indeed, noted certain linguistic similarities between these varieties. For example, Todd (1984: 26) writes on the process of language shift in the northern parts of Ireland as follows:

> One can, for example, make a good case in support of the thesis that Gaelic was not so much replaced by English in rural areas in

> Northern Ireland, as that Gaelic was probably relexified towards English while the phonology, idioms and sentence patterns of the native people remained Gaelic.

Relexification is one of the processes through which creoles have been said to evolve. What gives Todd's thesis (or hypothesis, rather) initial plausibility is the fact that both creoles and HE dialects have arisen under conditions of fairly rapid language shift. Furthermore, both can be described as contact vernaculars, because they reflect varying degrees of 'imperfect' learning and simplification processes due to the prevailing mode of transmission of the target language.

There are, however, some important differences. First, what is peculiar to the Irish situation is the existence there of a *single substrate*, Irish Gaelic (with its many different dialects, though). By comparison, most, if not all, creoles have evolved in more complex, linguistically *heterogeneous* circumstances (see, e.g. Thomason, *in press*). In Ireland, the confined nature and geographical isolation of the linguistic area have obviously helped to simplify the setting so as to make it in essence what Thomason (*in press*) has termed a 'two-language contact situation', as opposed to creolisation, which typically involves several languages. Not surprisingly, the linguistic outcomes of the two types of situation differ in many respects (see the discussion further below).

Secondly, there is a difference in the degree of *bilingualism* of the populations concerned. As Thomason (*in press*) notes, pidgins and creoles hardly ever arise in extensively bilingual, or even multilingual, communities. The Irish situation must have varied a lot from time to time and from place to place, but by the time the process of language shift got well under way, i.e. from around 1800 onwards, bilingualism may be assumed to have been quite wide-spread. De Fréine (1977:80) estimates the number of bilinguals in 1800 at one and a half million out of a total population of five million, i.e. about 30 per cent. According to Hindley (1990:17), it had risen to some 95 per cent by 1851.

A third difference between creoles and HE relates to the amount of input from the *superstrate language(s)*, which, I believe, follows directly from

the differences in the sociohistorical circumstances of the contact situation. HE has been found to preserve a lot of phonological, syntactic and other features which were characteristic of the English of the Early Modern English period and some of which have now been lost in other English dialects. The superstratal input to creoles is, not so much phonological or syntactic but *lexical* in nature: creole vocabulary is usually based on that of the European superstrate language, but grammar is a mixture of elements drawn from the substrate languages.

Despite the disagreements over the superstratal vs. substratal inputs to HE, we can point out several clear examples of EModE (and even earlier) phonological and grammatical features that are still retained in modern HE dialects. According to Lass (1990), conservative phonological features include 'incomplete split' of ME /u/, as in *put* vs. *but*; incomplete 'NURSE Merger' in words containing ME /ir, er, ur/ (*bird, fern, urn*); and monophthongal realisations of ME /a:/ and /O:/, as in *face, goat* (for further discussion, see Lass 1990; see also Henry 1958: 110 ff.; Harris 1990). In morphology, some speakers of HE vernacular still preserve, e.g. old plural forms such as *shoon* for *shoes* and *childer* for *children*; these have been long lost in other dialects of English. Conservative syntactic features also occur in HE; one example is the use of the pattern *for to* + infinitive, as in (6):

(6) ...the people aren't there now *for to* do it. (Kerry: D.B.)

This construction, which goes back to Middle English and even Old English, is also retained in other dialectal and nonstandard varieties of English.

Fourthly, if HE were to be likened to creoles, one should expect to find some evidence of HE pidgin, with the normal array of features associated with pidgins. A creole is commonly defined as a more advanced stage of a pidgin which has become the mother tongue of a group of people (see, e.g. Todd 1984: 4). Some of the most typical linguistic features of English-based pidgins include, e.g. use of mother tongue phonology, serial verbs, negation with *no* only, lack of verb inflections for tense, person or number, lack of copula, use of reduplicated forms, fixed word order, etc.

(see, e.g. Todd 1984: 4 ff.). Of course, we have very little evidence from the type of English that the Irish learners spoke in the early days of the language contact, but the scraps of evidence which we have from written sources (see, e.g. Bliss 1979) do not, generally, support the existence of HE pidgin. It is true that a certain amount of simplification occurred in early HE (e.g., subject dropping or lack of concord between subject and verb), but this falls far short of the full set of typical pidgin features.

The basic picture does not change if we compare the linguistic characteristics of early HE with those of creoles (see, e.g. Romaine 1988: 47 ff. for a list of the most typical features of creole grammars), although Todd (1984: 74) mentions Hiberno-English as a borderline case between English-related creoles and dialects of English. The basic differences, however, lie in what has already been mentioned above: creole grammars typically draw on more than one substrate language, whereas HE makes use of just one substrate source, Irish. It seems that, as suggested by Thomason (*in press*), there is a qualitative difference between contact languages which have evolved in conditions of two-language contact, involving relatively *persistent* ethnic communities, on the one hand, and those (like pidgins and creoles) which arise in linguistically heterogeneous settings involving *'new'* ethnic communities, on the other.

Finally, the *reasons* for language shift are yet another differentiating factor between creoles and HE. In pidgin and creole genesis, people have no choice, as it were, because a common medium of communication is an objective necessity dictated by their everyday needs, and the mixed nature of the linguistic and social environment excludes the possibility of promoting any one 'local' language to the status of a *lingua franca*. In the Irish context, by comparison, a bilingual society could (at least in theory) have been a workable alternative to a total language shift, and this was, of course, the situation well into the 19th century (and still is in some very restricted areas and contexts). The eventual course of development was not only due to external pressures on the indigenous language, but was determined to a great extent by various 'subjective' factors as well: as de Fréine puts it, most of the measures used to suppress Irish "were not the product of law or official regulation, but of a social self-generated movement of collective behaviour among the people themselves" (1977: 84).

5. HIBERNO-ENGLISH AND GENERAL MODELS OF LANGUAGE CONTACT

Other generalisations relevant to the Irish situation and the nature of HE emerge, e.g., from some of the general models of language contact discussed in the literature. Among these, the model of contact-induced change proposed by Thomason and Kaufman (1988) deserves a special place because of its comprehensiveness: instead of being a more or less random set of individual generalisations, their proposal seeks to incorporate into one and the same explanatory and predictive model both the sociohistorical and linguistic factors which are the most crucial in determining the outcome of language contact in different types of circumstances.

Thomason and Kaufman's starting-point is a distinction between two basic types of contact situation, viz. *language maintenance* and *language shift*. Under each type, the model then presents in broad terms the most likely linguistic outcomes of language contact. Principal factors determining these are the size of the population involved in language contact or shift, the intensity of contact (casual vs. intensive contact), the 'rate of success' and nature of the learning process (availability of the target language), and the degree of bilingualism among the borrowing-language or shifting speakers. Thomason and Kaufman's model is shown in a slightly simplified form in Table 1:

Table 1. Thomason and Kaufman's model of contact-induced change (based, with some omissions and simplifications, on Thomason and Kaufman 1988: 50).

CONTACT-INDUCED LANGUAGE CHANGE

in LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE	**in LANGUAGE SHIFT**
a) casual contact, including little bilingualism among borrowing-language speakers:	a) small shifting group or perfect learning:
Only (nonbasic) Vocabulary Borrowed	**No Interference in Target L as a Whole**
b) intensive contact, including much bilingualism among borrowing-language speakers over a long period of time:	b) large shifting group and imperfect learning:
Much lexical borrowing; moderate to heavy structural borrowing (especially in phonology and syntax)	**moderate to heavy substratum** (or superstratum/adstratum) **Interference** (especially in phonology and syntax)
c) overwhelming long-term cultural pressure from source-language speaker group:	c) extreme unavailability of target language:
massive grammatical replacement (or language death)	**only vocabulary successfully acquired, abrupt creolization**

According to this model, borrowing (the process at work in maintenance situations) and interference (in language shift) affect the various levels of language to differing degrees, depending on the basic type of situation. In the maintenance situations, borrowing starts from the lexicon, from where

it proceeds to syntax and other levels, if there is intensive contact and a lot of bilingualism over a long period of time. In language shift, where we are dealing with 'shift-induced interference' (i.e. substratum interference in the more common terminology), the overall picture is different: interference generally affects the phonetic/phonological and syntactic levels most of all. In extreme cases, the ultimate result is either 'massive grammatical replacement' (or even language death) or 'abrupt' creolization.[4]

We can now try to assess the case of HE from the perspective of Thomason and Kaufman's model. Broadly speaking, the sociohistorical setting of language contact and shift in Ireland and the linguistic characteristics of HE confirm the predictions laid down by Thomason and Kaufman's model. As Guilfoyle (1986: 127) notes, HE displays "preponderance of phonological and syntactic interference, over lexical interference", and this is what the model predicts, given that the case of HE is placed (as I think it should be) under the heading of 'language shift/large shifting group/imperfect learning'. Guilfoyle's characterisation is also in line with Bliss (1984: 141), who writes that "the number of actual Irish words used in Southern Hiberno-English is small, even in rural areas; educated people do not use them at all, except by conscious rusticism". These statements must not be understood as denying the importance of Irish input to HE vocabulary; one can detect a lot of Irish influence at that level, too, but the issue here is one of *relative* importance.

6. Conclusion

To conclude, every story of language contact and shift is unique in a certain obvious sense. Whoever or whatever those people and generations are who undergo the process of language shift at any given time, it remains a fact that "their likes will not be there again", to use a familiar Irish saying. Yet all stories share certain similarities, and as I have tried to show, there are factors which constitute obvious links between the case of HE and those of other contact vernaculars. These include, most notably, the general mode of transmission of a new language: instead of the 'normal' way of passing on the language from one generation to another, contact vernaculars are typically acquired under circumstances where transmission is disrupted some way or another, and where schooling plays

little or no role. However, in the Irish context the universal aspect is counterbalanced by the uniqueness of the linguistic setting, which manifests itself especially in the existence of a single, easily identifiable substrate. The fact that Irish (or any one of its dialects) can be shown to have been in the right place at the right time makes HE and the linguistic history of Ireland a particularly interesting object of study.

The linguistic outcomes of the language contact and shift in Ireland also contain both universal and unique elements. In general terms, the distinctive characteristics of HE follow the pattern predicted on the basis of Thomason & Kaufman's model of contact-induced change: contact influences are most salient at the phonological and syntactic levels, whereas HE lexicon is less obviously marked by substratal influence. A unique feature is the amount of superstratal input to HE, and the persistence in HE vernacular of certain features which have disappeared from other dialects. But the most distinctive element in the Irish story of language contact is undoubtedly the way in which it all led to large-scale language shift within such a remarkably short space of time.

NOTES

[1] The term 'universal' is here used in a very general sense as the opposite of 'language-specific', and it is not meant to be associated with any particular theoretical framework.

[2] I am aware that the official censuses have been criticised on several grounds, but that is a problem I cannot tackle in this paper.

[3] The examples here are taken from a corpus of present-day HE vernacular compiled and collected by myself in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The corpus consists of speech samples recorded from the following four regions: Counties Clare and Kerry in the (south-)west of Ireland, County Wicklow and Dublin City in the east of Ireland. For further details of the corpus, see Filppula 1986. The provenance of the examples and the speaker initials have been given in brackets after each example.

[4] I have left out pidgins altogether, and in Thomason and Kaufman's model, too, they are treated as a category of their own because they do not involve transmission of any kind, normal or disrupted.

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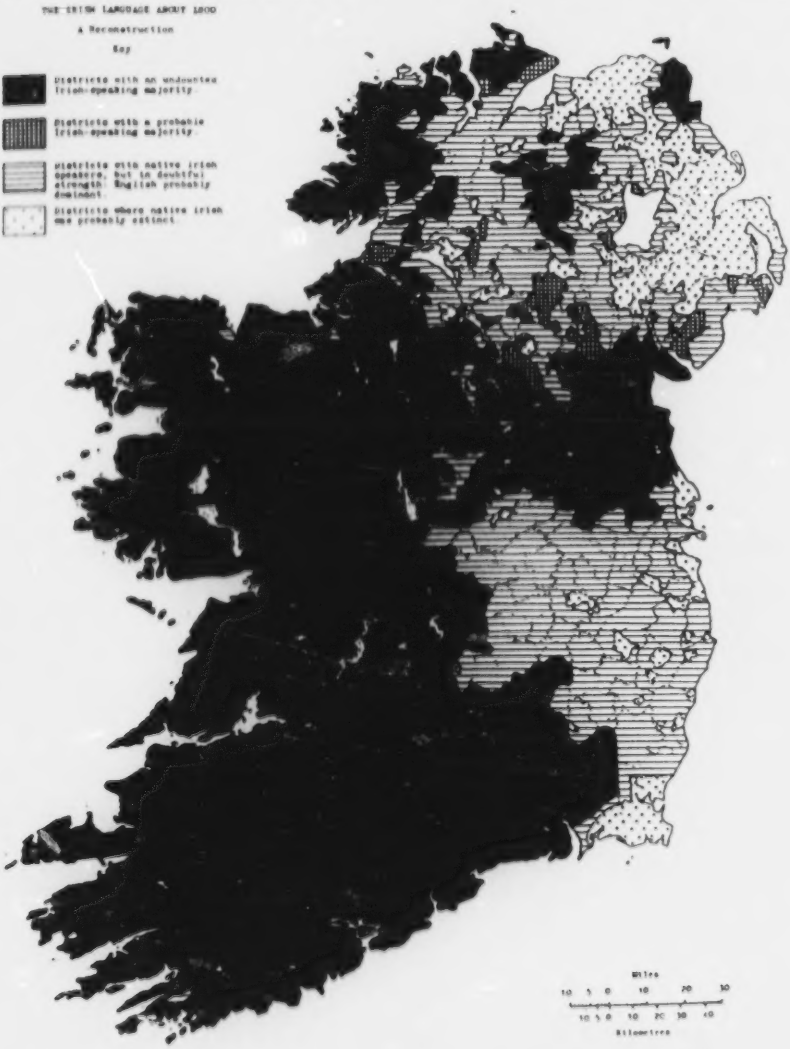
APPENDIX: Language maps of Ireland in 1800 and 1851.


THE IRISH LANGUAGE ABOUT 1800
A Reconstruction
Key
Districts with an undoubted Irish-speaking majority.
Districts with a probable Irish-speaking majority.
Districts with native Irish speakers, but in doubtful strength: English probably dominant.
Districts where native Irish are probably extinct.
Miles
Kilometres

Map 1. **The Irish language about 1800. A reconstruction based on literary sources and censuses 1851, 1881, 1911** (from *Hindley 1990: 9*).

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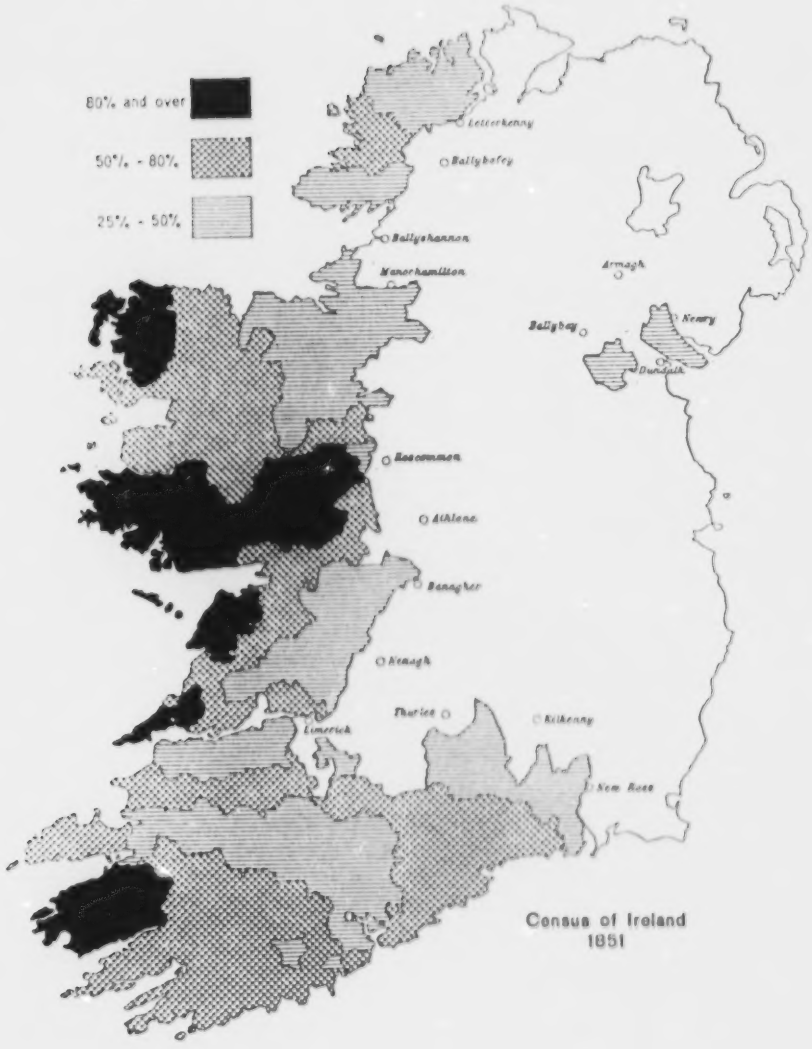

Map 2. **Census of Ireland 1851** (from *Ó Cuív 1969*).

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Creating the Third Self: Pragmatic Transfer in Third Language Acquisition[1]

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INTRODUCTION

This paper presents the outline of an extended research project aimed at exploring pragmatic transfer in the acquisition of Japanese as a third language (L3). Far from being restricted to 'good language learners' or the more esoteric corners of academia, L3 learning and acquisition occurs in a wide variety of settings. As more languages and cultures interact, pragmatic aspects of language learning have taken on greater significance because of the decidedly negative results of failure to control interlanguage pragmatics -- pragmalinguistic failure -- are costly to learners (Thomas 1983, Davies 1987). Despite the wide range of L3 learning and the importance of pragmatics in learning another language, L3 acquisition studies have been conducted as an intellectual aside to mainstream SLA research (Ringbom 1985) and interlanguage pragmatics have only recently emerged as a defined sub-field of SLA (Kasper and Dahl 1991, Kasper 1992). The research project outlined here takes much of its inspiration from the challenge of drawing on two areas of SLA research that offer much promise to contribute to mainstream SLA research and theory: L3 acquisition and interlanguage pragmatics.

AIMS

This research project has four major aims. The first is to introduce a sharper definition of L3 acquisition research as an enterprise and to discuss the contributions that this enterprise can make to SLA research and theory, particularly with reference to the study of cross-linguistic

influence and learning strategies. The second is to explore pragmatic transfer in a new context of L3 acquisition. It is hoped that this will contribute to a greater understanding of how cultural and individual factors act as constraints on pragmatic transfer in languages, such as Japanese, that require the use of a large number of honorific forms and formulaic expressions in everyday communication. The third is to analyse the validity of using data collection methods that were designed for use with SLA research on Western languages, such as the C-test, discourse completion tests (DCT), and introspective methods (think-aloud protocols and retrospective interviews), in researching the acquisition of non-Western languages by non-Western learners (see Robinson 1992 and Rose 1994 for a critical discussion of this issue). It is hoped that this will contribute to the debate on universality in pragmatics by questioning the assumption that data collection methods themselves have universal validity. The fourth is to suggest the pedagogical implications of the research findings for learners and teachers in formal instructional settings and for learners who seek to learn a third language autonomously in a natural setting.

BACKGROUND

Language Transfer and Third Language Acquisition

The term 'language transfer' itself has been the subject of much controversy as some researchers prefer to use 'cross-linguistic influence' as a broader term that includes 'language transfer' as well as other phenomena, such as language attrition and avoidance, that are caused by the influence of one or more languages on the acquisition of an additional language (Sharwood Smith and Kellerman 1986). For the purposes of this research project, 'transfer' will refer to linguistic and cultural knowledge from one language and cultural systems that learners utilize consciously and unconsciously in acquiring and communicating successfully in an additional language.

Before outlining the research design of the present study, however, it is necessary to define 'third language' (L3) in this research. L1 refers to the native language, and L2 to a language learned or acquired after the acquisition of the L1, the latter being the principal concern of SLA research. This leads logically to defining L3 as the learning or

acquisition of an additional language beyond the L2. To avoid possible confusion, LN will be used to refer to either the L1 or the L2 in discussing the L3; this contrasts with Ringbom's (1985) usage of LN to refer to languages other than the L1 and the target L3. Important variables that must be considered in defining the context of L3 acquisition research are: 'linguistic variables' such as the level of L2 proficiency when learning the L3; 'affective variables' such as attitudes and motivation; and 'cognitive variables' such as the age of learners when they acquired the L2 and are learning the L3 and overall language aptitude and intelligence. Furthermore, a distinction needs to be made between learners in a bilingual environment who are learning an L3 and learners in a monolingual environment who are learning an L3 as a second foreign language. It is expected that learners in a bilingual or multilingual environment will, in most cases, have higher L2 proficiency and more experience in applying learning and communication strategies to the task of learning another language than learners in a monolingual environment. 'Multilingual' and 'trilingual' will refer to the state in which more than two languages are used simultaneously, or to an individual who has acquired more than two languages.

Most L3 acquisition studies have found that transfer into L3 occurs from the language that is typologically closest to the L3. Research on Asian and African learners with an Indo-European L2 who are learning a closely related L3 has shown that the L2 is the predominant source of transfer (Bentahila 1975, Ahukanna, Lund, and Gentile 1979, Singh and Carroll 1979, Khaldi 1981, Ringbom 1985). Likewise, L3 learners whose L1 and L2 are both Indo-European also transfer from the language that is closest to the target L3 (Singleton and Little 1984, Singleton 1987). No L3 acquisition studies have been conducted on three languages that belong to three different language families, or on the acquisition of a non-Western L3. There is a considerable divergence of opinion about the role of L1 and L2 in L3 acquisition. Vildomec (1963), Ahukanna, Lund, and Gentile (1979), and Singh Carroll (1979) all conclude that L3 acquisition suffers from undue negative interference from L1, L2, or both, whereas, Khaldi (1981), Singleton and Little (1984), Ringbom (1985), and Singleton (1987) emphasize the facilitative effects of L1 and L2 knowledge, particularly if the learner

perceives either the L1 or L2 (or both) to be closely related to the L3. This second line of research expands on the Kellerman (e.g. Kellerman 1983) hypothesis that posits perceived language distance between L1 and L2 as a major constraint on transfer along with 'markedness'. Researchers also disagree on which areas of language are more susceptible to transfer: Ringbom and his group of researchers at the Åbo Akademi in Finland (Ringbom 1985) have concluded that transfer from L2 into L3 occurs mainly in comprehension and in lexical selection; Singleton (1987) noted a large amount of lexical transfer from Spanish into L3 French in a case study of an Anglophone learner's oral production in French; Vildomec (1963), Bentahila (1975), Singh and Carroll (1979) have all noted phonological transfer from L2 into L3; Bentahila (1975), and Ahukanna, Lund, and Gentile (1979) and Khaldi (1981) have observed syntactic transfer from L2 into L3. In a study of learners with no previous exposure to the target language, Dutch in this case, Singleton and Little (1984) concluded that learners who had some knowledge of German scored higher on a test of Dutch oral and written comprehension than those who had no knowledge of German.

Pragmatics and Politeness

'Pragmatics' is a global term that deals with linguistic and non-linguistic aspects of meaning from the viewpoint of language use. Within pragmatics, politeness phenomena were chosen as the focus of investigation because they often influence the success or failure of learner attempts to communicate in another language (Thomas 1983, Davies 1987). 'Politeness' in this research refers to Fraser's (1990) definition of politeness as a 'conversational contract' among participants to adhere to the expected rules of the particular conversation or communicative setting. Investigating politeness phenomena in Japanese is of particular importance because of the large number of honorific forms and formulaic expressions, and because of the vital role that such expressions play in Japanese communication (Matsumoto 1989). Thus, by meshing L3 acquisition with pragmatic transfer, this research project will explore how learners of an L3 utilize their already existing linguistic and cultural knowledge in the production and comprehension of politeness speech acts in Japanese as an L3.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Hypothesis

Given the aims of this research, the following hypothesis will be investigated. This initial hypothesis, inspired by Khaldi (1981), Kellerman (1983), Singleton and Little (1984), Ringbom (1985), and Singleton (1987), holds that the learners' perception of language and culture distance between L1/L2 and the target L3 determine their conscious and unconscious decisions on which linguistic and cultural knowledge is transferable in an L3 communicative setting. This hypothesis is based in part on the premise that learning is cognitive problem solving through the creative application of existing knowledge and information processing strategies. This hypothesis gains further support from the premise that language and culture are inseparable from one another in SLA (Janicki 1985, Davies 1987, Kramsch 1993). This initial hypothesis can thus be expanded to predict that learners of an L3 will utilize their entire range of linguistic and cultural knowledge to develop and later test hypotheses about the L3, but that the complexity of this task and the large amount of knowledge in question will lead learners to develop a strategy of utilizing knowledge from the language(s) and culture(s) that they perceive to be closest to the L3, and thus increase their potential to communicate successfully in the L3.

Learners

Three types of data will be collected to investigate this hypothesis: first, two rounds of empirical data from learners of Japanese as an L3 will be obtained from data collection procedures designed specifically to test the above hypothesis; second, experiential reports on L3 acquisition by persons selected by the researcher who represent a diverse sampling of L3 learners; third, classroom observations of Japanese being taught as an L3, which will provide the groundwork for discussing the pedagogical implications of this research. The two rounds of empirical data combined with classroom observations will take place in different learning environments to increase the generalizibility of the findings from a relatively small number of learners. The experiential reports will be collected by the researcher concurrent with the other data collection procedures.

The first round of empirical data collection will take place with intermediate learners of Japanese as an L3 at the Language Centre at the University of Sydney. Learners will be chosen from a combination of several L1 and L2 backgrounds in order to enhance comparability of the findings. Considering the demographics of Sydney, it is expected that most learners will have an L1/L2 combination of English and an Asian language such as Chinese or Korean. L2 proficiency, which should be higher than Japanese proficiency according to the research design, will be controlled as an important linguistic variable in L3 acquisition by reference to learner performance in L2 language courses and proficiency tests if need be. Affective variables such as attitudes and motivation will be controlled by reference to a learner-completed questionnaire. Further variables such as age and overall academic attainment will also be considered.

Intermediate learners of Japanese were chosen because they stand between two extremes: *ab initio* learners, who may not be familiar with honorific and formulaic expressions, and advanced learners, who have more metalinguistic and metacultural knowledge that may make pragmatic transfer more difficult to verify by the research methods that are used in this research project.

Instruments

The following data collection instruments, all of which will include think-aloud procedures followed by retrospective interviews, will be used in the empirical section: 1) a multiple choice questionnaire on attitudes and motivation; 2) a Japanese C-test; 3) a Japanese business letter writing task; 4) open-ended and close-ended discourse completion tests (DCT) in Japanese; 5) an oral recall task, using visual prompts, of various Japanese speech act dialogues; (6) classroom observation of learners who participate in this study and of other learners (see Raabe (1986) for the only study of an L3 classroom). In addition, native speakers of Japanese will be asked to complete the C-test, the business letter writing task, and the DCT's in order to check the validity of the instruments and to compare the learners' responses with native speakers using the same instruments.

Procedure

Learners will be asked to think-aloud in whichever language is comfortable for them as they complete all of the tasks except the attitudes and motivation questionnaire. The researcher will instruct the learners on how to use think-aloud protocols before the beginning of the first session. Each session will be conducted individually, or in pairs, with the researcher. Each session will be videotaped to provide a visual and oral prompt in the retrospective interviews that are to follow; these interviews will be conducted in English or in a language known by the researcher and will be audiotaped for future reference. Much controversy has surrounded the use of introspective methods in research in psychology and linguistics. Given the emphasis on the individual's creativity in learning and on the importance of individual perceptions about language and learning in this research, introspective methods offer invaluable insight into the processes and thoughts of learners, which more than compensates for doubts about the accuracy of data obtained through such methods (see Færch and Kasper (eds) (1987) for a thorough analysis of introspective methods and Kasper Dahl (1991) for a review of research methods in interlanguage pragmatics). Furthermore, the introspective data will be used together with linguistic product data from learners and from native speakers, classroom observations, and experiential reports.

Special Considerations with Japanese

The C-test, which has proven to be a valid indicator of learner proficiency in Western languages, needs to be tied to more objective levels of difficulty because no studies have as yet used the C-test with Japanese. Every effort will be made to select passages that correspond to the intermediate level of difficulty on the Japanese Language Proficiency Test, which is given yearly by the Japan Foundation and which is recognized as an objective measurement of Japanese proficiency by Japanese universities. The development of data collection methods is further complicated by the issue of complexity of Japanese orthography in which two syllabary systems of 51 characters each, *hiragana* and *katakana*, are used with roughly 2000 Chinese characters. Given that the focus of this research is on Japanese interlanguage pragmatics and that think-aloud protocols will be used extensively, every effort will be made to prevent the complex

orthographic system from interfering with data collection procedures without unduly altering the integrity of the language in the instruments.

CONCLUSION

Third language learners who successfully navigate the complexities of three linguistic and cultural systems will witness the slow emergence of a 'third self ' that offers the potential for greater participation in the diversity of human life. It is hoped that the questions raised and explored in this research project will help to explain how this third self comes into being.

NOTES

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Reading: Motivation Through Challenge

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Even though *reading* is currently receiving more attention from researchers in SLL and SLA, (cf e.g. AILA Review 8: 1991) and from authors of curricula and syllabuses[1], it still remains outside the mainstream interest in these areas. In this paper I will attempt to redefine *reading* and to discuss its position within the process of language learning by linking it to a revised concept of motivation. This article is not designed to give practical advice nor does it refer immediately to any classroom situation. Its aim is to discuss the broader issue of integrating a particular activity into a particular learning process: the process of learning a foreign language. If language is conceived in the Humboldtian tradition as *energeia* and not as *ergon*, the creative aspect of language use becomes central in any linguistic analysis (cf. Humboldt 1988:49). Creativity, though, is not confined to the sender/speaker/author as one might readily assume, but is also required in the receiver/listener/reader. In particular the reader has to be very creative, as a number of features which are normally associated with conveying information are absent in the reading process. The three central concepts mentioned above - *reading*, *motivation*, and *challenge* , therefore, need some clarification with regard to their interpretation in this paper, starting with the concept of *reading* or more precisely, *reading in L2*. I will not endeavour to give an overview of the different types of reading that have been identified such as *skimming*, *scanning*, *search reading* and *receptive/responsive reading* etc., in a field in which the terminology is still fairly inconsistent (cf. Schwerdtfeger 1981:270), but rather try to adopt a more general view of this *Forgotten third skill* as Kellermann (1981), almost fifteen years ago, quite appropriately

named it - within the general framework of present day language learning and teaching. I will, furthermore, attempt to define the position of the reader by looking at it from a perspective which has been developed within the various schools of structuralism and post-structuralism in the course of the past two decades.

Until recently *reading* played (at least ideologically) a rather marginal role within the framework of the *direct method* and the ensuing *communicative paradigm*. Kellermann's attempt to move it from its peripheral position in language teaching to a more central one certainly was a move in the right direction, but it remained an isolated one for quite some time. However, the term *skill*, employed by her does not do justice to the very complex activity that we call *reading*. *Reading* is far more than a skill, it is communication (cf. Schwerdtfeger 1981:260). This point of view is neither new nor does it have a claim to any originality (cf. Brinsley 1627 quoted in Kelly 1969:134). But it has not been of great concern to either practice or theory of SLL and SLA. *Reading* as an activity is tied to the written word, which, by definition, is secondary to the spoken word. In an ideological context where the spoken word is conceived of as the basic means of communication, *reading* must consequently be interpreted as a secondary activity, a skill that is useful but not essential with regards to communication.

The three elements interacting in this complex process are: the reader, the text and the author (cf. Schwerdtfeger 1981: 260). The reader is confronted not only with an array of symbols which he has to decipher, but what is far more important, he has to link the concepts he encounters with the ones he already knows, with previous experiences, with his acquired knowledge in general. Reading a text in L2 thus requires problem solving on two levels: on the level of code-breaking and on the level of the functional text. Both are, of course, closely connected (cf. Schwerdtfeger 1981: 261).

Unlike any direct-face-to-face communication, this situation seems to be slightly disadvantageous for the reader, as he is not party to the kind of help from the other participants (text and author) which he might get in verbal interaction. That is, he has to reconstruct or even construct on his own the sense or message of a text to a far greater degree than in a

face to face interaction. To put it positively: he is quite autonomous. I will discuss the implications of this perspective at a later stage in more detail.

The two other concepts mentioned are *challenge* and *motivation*, which cannot be dealt with separately as they are linked by a cause-effect relationship. *Motivation* here must not be confused with *integrative* or *instrumental motivation*, terms which refer directly to a sociological dimension (cf. Gardner/Lambert 1972) but the kind of motivation that has been the focus of research in Motivational Psychology for more than a hundred years. The basic question thus being: what makes us do things? This is certainly not the place to give even a rough account of how the analysis became more sophisticated and the approaches more philosophical rather then technical (cf. Weiner 1972:1ff). What seems to be generally agreed on is that motivation is intimately linked with *challenge*, or as Weiner (1972:195) puts it:

> 'The tendency to approach an achievement-related goal, or the hope of success (Ts) is postulated to be a product of three factors: the need for achievement, also known as the motive for success (Ms), the probability that one will be successful at the task (Ps), and the incentive value of success (Is). It is postulated that these three components are multiplicatively related:
>
> Ts = Ms x Ps x Is.'

The need for achievement (*Ms*) was defined by Atkinson (1964:214) as 'the capacity to experience pride in accomplishment'. It is an affective phenomenon and represents a relatively stable or enduring disposition to strive for success (cf Weiner 1972: 195). The second factor *(Ps)* the *probability of success* is a subjective rather than an objective variable, even though it can be influenced by beliefs or experiences in a given social environment. With regards to the learnability of languages, German for example, is generally believed to be a *difficult* language, whereas English in most countries has a reputation for being a relatively *easy* one. Hence, an individual taking an English course will generally have a much higher expectancy to achieve the set objective than in the case of a German course.

The *incentive value of success* (*Is*) is inversely related to the *hope of success* in as much as the pride experienced in the accomplishment of a difficult task is greater than that experienced at having accomplished an easier one (cf. Weiner 1972:197). Thus, within the theoretical framework of this model, mastering English normally does not entitle a subject to the kind of pride the mastery of German would. In other words, this is where the element of *challenge* comes in. That is, a goal must be believed to be attainable, otherwise the *probability of success* becomes zero with the consequece that the product becomes zero. The *incentive value* (Is) on the other hand, could have a similar effect on Ts (the tendency to approach an achievement related goal) if it is too low. In other words *a challenge* must be maintained in order to secure, together with the relatively stable factor *Ms* (*need for achievement*), a high value on the other side of the equation for the *tendency to approach* an achievement related goal *Ts*.[2]

Applying this model to the process of language learning, we can quite easily detect a basic flaw: the *probability of success* (*Ps*) will, at a certain stage go towards zero when the Ts (*the hope of success*) is defined as *mastering the language* and when, in a hidden agenda, we find the additional objective *like a native speaker*. In other words, a challenge ceases to be one when the probability of success drops to zero. The task in question then is beyond the capability of the individual.[3]

My earlier assertion that reading has become marginal in the wake of direct, audiolingual or audiovisual and communicative methods is only half true. The disregard and even contempt for language in its written form has a far longer tradition. Saussure for instance maintained that 'Writing veils the appearance of language; it is not a guise for language but a disguise.' (Saussure 1983: 51). This attitude can even be traced back as far as Rousseau who, in his unfinished essay *Pronunciation* declared:

> 'Languages are made to be spoken. Writing is nothing but a supplement of speech. The analysis of thought is made through speech' (cf. Rousseau 1986:78).

Nevertheless the written word as a medium of language instruction has dominated the classroom for quite some time. But what is known as the *grammar-translation-method* can only be superficially related to *reading* in so far as this method employs the skill of deciphering a written text, not necessarily with the intention of leading towards an understanding of the text as a whole or its semantization (cf Schwerdtfeger 1981:261). *Reading* within the framework of the *grammar-translation-method* is basically seen as a necessary prerequisite to transfer meaning from one language to another. The fact that the method in question was not at all successful as regards oral proficieny - something one should not hold against it as it was never designed to achieve such ends - is certainly one of the many factors responsible for marginalizing reading. In other words, teaching through grammar and translation was not particularly successful, it was largely based on working with texts, a kind of work which relies on reading; this leads to the logically incorrect but perfectly understandable conclusion that reading is not an important activity which involves the reader/learner as an autonomous participant in a highly complex interaction, but a mere *skill*. The fact that the above mentioned process of semantization hardly ever occurred in grammar-translation exercises (looking at certain types of textbooks and examination papers, particularly in third level language teaching in the United Kingdom, it seems that the authors try to avoid semantization at all costs) reading in general got the reputation of being useful only on a superficial level: reading is very often limited to what Westhoff (1987:21) calls *learning-reading*, i.e. the skill, which is an end in itself.

It was mentioned above that reading has to be interpreted as communication in which three elements interact: the reader, the author and the text. The first one, the reader, has already been discussed. In a communicative reading process he has to develop a reading competence, i.e. the disposition and the ability to interact with a text.

The author, the second participant, normally has only a vague idea for whom he is writing and who will eventually read what he has written. To ensure that his communicative intentions are successful the author must a) inform the reader about the subjective modality, that is his (the author's) judgement on the text, b) use metalinguistic elements to

specify the scope of his message (chapter titles for example can be interpreted as such), and has to c) maintain contact with the reader (cf. Schwerdtfeger 1981:262 and Davies & Widdowson 1975:164ff).

The text, as an intermediary between two intentionally acting subjects remains passive. And the fact that it does so is exactly what makes it so attractive as a device for language learning in general and not only as a component within the framework of a given curriculum, because the *reader* is not the passive receiver of the message but the active creator. As indicated aboved, this might to some extent hold true for any communication, but in face-to-face interaction the author/speaker has a much more authoritative position. He can force his message upon the listener. Reading on the other hand offers a far wider range of possibilities on the reader's side: he can totally or partially ignore the author's attitude, he might not be able or willing to decipher the meaning or function of metalinguistic elements and he might misinterpret the author's contact signals. In any reading process, whether L1 or L2 these phenomena occur. Some parts of the intended message may be lost and will have to be replaced by those created by the reader. They might be very similar to those the author had in mind, but there is no guarantee that they are. Under the assumption that it is the readers intention to communicate, one is inclined to believe that his constructions at least attempt to match the authors intentions. But this is by no means essential. In particular, literary texts[4] depend on the reader's creative participation because one of their constituent elements are the *blanks* which create the so called *appeals structure* i.e. the text becomes an entity which is independent of its author, his intentions and goals, its indetermination being exactly one of its main constituents (cf. Iser 1972:228ff), a process decribed by Barthes as 'the death of the author' (Barthes 1988:167). According to Barthes the author has to be sacrificed in order to give the text - and consequently the reader - autonomy. Or, as Lacan puts it even more radically: 'There is nothing outside the text'.

In a normal classroom situation in which the interaction is assymetrical by definition, communication - more often than not - is unidirectional and leaves very little room for creativity at the receiving end. The classic text-book text underlines these tendencies as they are in general

non-functional, i.e. not designed to leave room for the reader to be an active participant in a communicative process. (cf. Schwerdtfeger 1981:263, Westhoff 1987:21, Rösler 1994:120ff). And this is crucial: It is only too obvious that institutionalized language instruction is limited by various factors of economy which are very difficult to eliminate: a) economy of time, i.e. a predetermined number of classes and duration of class periods, b) economy of materials, i.e. a certain range of topics has to be covered during a course and last but most definitely not least there is c) the economy of energy, i.e. teachers and learners have only a limited amount of energy at their disposal. One of the consequences is that communication has very little space within this framework (cf. Schwerdtfeger 1981:260).

There are several other phenomena which are detrimental to goal-achievement in the classroom situation and even in an everyday face-to-face interaction in the target language, namely, the pressure to perfom well here and now. Even though it might not be felt so strongly in the rather artificial setting of the classroom, it is an immensely important element in the language wilderness of the target culture. In other words, the amount of energy and concentration spent on a task oriented performance as for instance participating in a discussion or trying to get a refund for an unused train ticket, leaves hardly any room for paying attention to the language itself.

One should, however, bear in mind, that the learners objectives vary with regard to the language they are learning. Learning English for example is certainly different from learning most other languages inasmuch as English has become a widely accepted *lingua franca*. That is, people do not learn English primarily with the goal to communicate within the framework of the target culture, which in the case of English is quite difficult to define anyhow, but to aquire a skill which enables them to participate in some kind of interaction internationally. As a consequence, the learner might favour an instrumental approach that provides him with a code rather than a language. But the learning of almost any other language is solely directed towards communication in the target culture. So while it may make perfect sense to be able to master a number of standard situations in English by having the appropriate set phrases and idiomatic expressions at ones disposal, this

is not true for other languages. Sometimes it may even have an adverse effect. For instance quite frequently foreigners feel that using English is less stressful, for example, in a Spanish speaking environment than is Spanish. I mention this here only to underline the fact that English as a foreign language certainly has a different position in terms of motivation than does for example German, Spanish or Japanese.

If the above cited formula Ts = Ms x Ps x Is for the 'tendency to approach an achievement related goal' or 'the *hope of success*' is now applied to a communicative reading process we get the following picture: Under the assumption that *Ms* (motive for success), as already mentioned, is a relatively stable factor which in this equation does not require any special attention the *probability of success* will become quite high as the goal in question, reading a text, is, compared to the higher level objective, learning a language, a well defined one. The link between the performance of an act, the instrumental action and the attainment of the goal is far more obvious. But this is only one factor. Another, even more important element in my opinion, is that the reader to quite a large extent is involved in the definition of the objective, or in other words in making his own sense of a given text.

This involves appropriate strategies on at least two levels, on the code level and on the level of the functional text. As the code has to be broken to gain access to the fuctional text, the reader will have to depend on the reading strategies which he has already developed in L1. He will have to pay closer attention to the formal syntactical and morphological structures and the access to the functional text will to some extent rely on a more or less successful performance on this level. This, however, is not the goal to be attained. It is one necessary component of a complex activity. Nevertheless, the very fact that this component exists in L2 reading requires a level of reflection, a metalinguistic approach, even if only a rudimentary one. The reader is thus forced to shape his tools as he proceeds, which again implies that he is an active and creative participant in this process.

The *incentive value of success* which is defined as being inversely related to the *hope of success* i.e. the lower the hope of success the higher the incentive value, (becoming president of the United States as a

goal has undoubtedly a very high incentive value but a very low value as regards the hope of success) can also, at least partially, be determined by the reader. The fact that time, essential in any face to face interaction (classes do not go on for ever and participants in real life communication do not have unlimited patience), plays only a minor role in reading, enables the learners to approach texts well above their 'objectively' determined or subjectively felt level of proficiency. In other words: *reading* an authentic literary text is one of the very few areas where the learner is confronted with the reality of the target language without having to run the risk of communicating unsuccessfully in that language. In other words, a literary text does not take into account that the reader has not covered a particular section of grammar or has only a very limited vocabulary and is in this respect very much like real face-to-face interaction in the target language. But unlike this type of interaction where these limitations often are responsible for unsuccessful communication and subsequently lead to what is known as as *avoidance of failure* i.e. 'the capacity to experience shame given nonattainment of a goal' (Weiner 1972:200), the text is the construction of the learner, in other words, the communication is successful by definition, because 'linguistically, the author is never more than the instance writing...' (Barthes 1988:169). Thus reading must be seen as a highly challenging and persistently motivating activiy.

The conclusion which can be drawn from the afore said is that reading, to fulfil a more useful function in language teaching, should be considered as a truly creative rather than a basically receptive process. In Bühler's terminology any language sign has three principal functions: *expression* (Ausdruck), *representation* (Darstellung) and *appeal* (Appell) (cf. Bühler 1934:28). It seems to be quite obvious that the efforts in *reading in L2* are normally associated with the first two, *expression* and *representation*. The learner is supposed to find out what the author wants to say and how he says it. Sacrificing the author as Barthes suggested would put the reader into a far more autonomous position. He, the reader, determines what the text means, a position in which the motivation is based on challenge as it reflects the eternal 'struggle of men and signs' (Barthes 1988:173).

NOTES

1 The new German Syllabus for the Leaving Certificate determines for instance under III Cultural Awareness as one of the performance targets 'identifying meaning present but not overtly expressed in such a [literary] text' and 'appreciating the "tone" of such a text.'

2 I would like to point out at this stage that I see the formula discussed above as a valuable heuristic device, not as one that yields exact, quantifiable results.

3 This, in my opinion, is one reason, and probably a very important one, for the difficulties we encounter in the majority of intermediate courses where normally the highest drop-out rates can also be found.

4 Barthes (1988:169) questions the validity of the distinction between literary and non-literary texts.

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A Native Bound-Morpheme Combines with Fully Nativised Borrowed Morphemes: A Highly Productive Language-Contact Feature in the Irish of Cape Clear[1].

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Historically, Irish has always acquired, nativised, and assimilated a superstratum from other languages with which it has been in contact — from Latin[2], Welsh[3], Old Norse[4], and Norman French[5] and, most of all, from Middle and Modern English. Indeed its period of contact with English is now an 800 years one. This particular language contact has enriched the Irish language, at the lexical level particularly, until the rapid decline of Irish throughout most of the country both in the last and the present century. It has enriched the language and its lexis, for borrowings were first nativised or fully adapted to the phonological and grammatical systems of the language before being adopted and assimilated into the linguistic system as a whole. This being the case, the copious accretions as they occurred historically made no serious or destabilising impact on the structure of the language as a whole, for, as I've said, they were at first adapted to the most highly structured areas of that language, to its phonology or sound system and to its grammatical system (these systems themselves, of course, underwent their own gradual change and development in the normal way as time went by.)

The language-contact of Irish and English continues to-day and is very extensive. The centuries old contact and its effects continue in

Gaeltacht areas but the new and main locus of contact is the Irish (heavily pidginised and increasingly creolised) of school-bilinguals whose L2 or target language Irish is. The incidence of transfer and of interference phenomena from L1 Hiberno-English is extremely high at the phonological and grammatical levels in the approximative intermediate linguistic systems of most learners, while simultaneously a peculiar purism at the lexical level doesn't countenance, indeed disallows almost, the centuries-old nativising of loanwords process and seems to prescribe and promote instead a profusion of calques (or loan-translations), coinages, and revivals of earlier forms many of which have lost their pristine immediacy and former richness of association. To say that the effects and impact on the structure of the Irish language in this case are enormous would be, I think, no exaggeration: phonemic under-differentiation is maximal in the speech of most learners and phonetic realisation is largely disregarded — most learners merely use their L1 phonemes of Hiberno-English and are blissfully unaware of distinctions which are crucial in Irish. The now widespread revived earlier form *todhchaí*[6] (the future) for instance becomes *'towkey' in the speech of most learners; and similarly at the grammatical level, morphological structure is often treated with abandon inglorious — the calque *frithghiniúint* (contraception) for instance being replaced as often as not by its genitive form *frithghiniúna* and heard in speech as 'friggin' Oonagh'.

Meanwhile the other (and older) contact and its effects still continue to enrich (for enrichment it is) the Irish lexis in Gaeltacht areas to-day. Just as *bosca/bocsa* (box), and *cistin* (kitchen), and *cóta* (coat), and *gúna* (gown), and *lampa*, (lamp), and *criú* (crew), and *ceaisiomar* (cashmere shawl < Kashmir), and countless others were in their day nativised, or adapted and adopted (so that they soon became *hiberniores ipsis hibernis*), and indeed, just as *seic* (cheque), and *bus* (bus), and *galf* (golf), and *sacar* (soccer), having been fully adapted in the first place, are all fine lexical items to-day when they are spoken with the phonemes of Irish, so too /b'l'ak'/ *bleaic* (a 'black') is normal in Gaeltacht speech to-day (e.g. in *phós sí bleaic*, she married a black, *phós sé bleaic mná*, he married a black woman) as also is /b'l'as'd'/ *bleaist* (blast) (e.g. in *bhí an ball go léir dóite ón/ag an mbleaist*, the

whole place was burnt from the blast) at least in Corca Dhuibhne and in Cléire.

A further refinement of this lexical borrowing is the combining of nativised and native morphemes: *bleaiceanna* — or *bleaiceannaí*, particularly in Connaught Irish (blacks), *leaideanna/-eannaí* (lads), *meaitseanna/-eannaí* (matches), *steipeanna/-eannaí* (steps) and *pinceanna/-eannaí* (Kerrs Pinks) etc. are normal in most Gaeltacht speech; other examples are *ribhití* (rivets) in Cléire, *bulaíocht* (bullying) in Corca Dhuibhne, and *béileanna agus peaicitsí* (bales and packages) in Cléire; *leaindeáil sé anuas ó Thír Chonaill* (he landed down from Donegal) and *leaindeálfaidh crabhaid ó Bhaile Átha Cliath* (a crowd will land from Dublin) are from my field-notes for Mayo and Corca Dhuibhne respectively; *an bhildeáil sin* (that building) and *na bildeálacha san* (those buildings) are from Cléire, and *lúsáltha* (loose), *rabhaineáltha* (round) and even *babhaindeáltha* (bound) are from Munster Irish generally; *bucáltha* in Munster and *bucáilte* in Connaught and Ulster (meaning booked) correspond in their formation, for instance, to *bácáltha* and *bácáilte* (baked) now long since in the language.

A particular variety of this blending of nativised and native morphemes is highly productive to this day in Gaeltacht Irish, particularly in the Irish of Cléire or Cape Clear. I shall now deal in some detail with this particular case in the remainder of this paper.

In this particular case the Irish bound-morpheme *-éir* /e:r'/ is substituted, at first, for the English bound-morpheme *-er* (sometimes *-ar*, *-or*) and it combines most productively then, as required, with a multiplicity of fully nativised borrowed morphemes in a profusion of new loan blends — the borrowed morphemes being fully adapted phonologically in the first place, and the whole blend conforming thereafter to the morphological patterns of Irish: thus *draidhbh* /drəiv'/ (< E. drive) combines with *-éir* /e:r'/ to give *draidhbhéir*, which was the normal word for a *driver* in Munster dialects and which is still normal usage in Cléire and in Corca Dhuibhne (the word *tiománaí* denoting a *drover* instead, as it still carries connotations of force or forceful persuasion);

and *draidhbhéir* then inflects grammatically just like all those other similar borrowings now long since in general usage in the language e.g. *siúinéir* (joiner/carpenter), *bácaeir* (baker), *ráipéir* (rapier), *tincéir* (tinker), and many more besides[7]; in its oblique cases *gnó an draidhbhéara* (the business of the driver) and *ar an ndraidhbhéir* (on the driver) and with its /i:/ plural morpheme as in *draidhbhéirí eile* (other drivers).

The interlingual combinatory process with which we are dealing here continues, of course, in its effect, a long established borrowing process in the growth and development of the Irish lexis. This borrowing process was readily resorted to even in Anglo-Norman times, for instance, as even surname evidence e.g. *Áirséir* (< Archer, le Archer) and *Scinéir* (< Skinner, le Skynnere) attests[8]; and numerous lexical items in all varieties of the language to-day such as those already cited, and such useful vocabulary as *grósaeir* (grocer), *péintéir* (painter), *fidiléir* (fiddler), *búistéir* (butcher), and many others, attest to its usefulness ever since.

There is a notable predilection for the *-éir* morpheme of agency (and simply for the suffix *-éir* in some cases) in the Irish of Cape Clear/Cléire (*-éir*, *-óir* and *-úir* of course carry similar semantic content, *-óir* having derived historically from Latin *-arius*, and *-éir* and *-úir*, it seems, being of Norman-French/Middle English provenance[9]); it replaces the more usual *-óir* in *feirméir* (farmer) and in *feirméireacht* for *feirmeoireacht* (farming) for instance, and in *bainistéir* for *bainisteoir* (manager); and in *bádaeir* and *bádaeireacht* (as in the Irish of Ring Co. Waterford also) for *bádóir* (boatman) and *bádóireacht* (boating) — indeed *bádaeir* and *bádaeireacht* are somewhat pejorative terms which are reserved, not for respected and worthy seamen in Cape, but for 'lucht teaspaigh' instead! Its usage is extended to *-ar* and *-or* ending English borrowings as well, in *piléir* (pillar) for instance instead of the borrowings *piolóir/piléar* elsewhere. It has long since been employed in Cape too in *laidhnéir* (liner) instead of *línéar*, though *himéar* rather than *himéir* is used instead of *casúr* (hammer), its plural *himéirí* being slang also for testicles. With the combinatory process which we are discussing it is preferred in Cléire also to the nativised complete borrowing, e.g. in *baidhléir* (boiler), rather than *baidhlear* as in Corca Dhuibhne, and in

scúnaeir (schooner) rather than *scúnar*. And there is the adaptation of syllable stress too: you will have noticed the provective stress of Southern Irish, the advancing of the primary stress to the *-éir* syllable with its long vowel, in all but one of the examples we've met (*bainistéir* /ban'is'd'e:r'/ being the exception.) This of course is of no great importance for it isn't central to the process; we can see it as a concomitant feature and one to be expected maybe, but not one which is necessary to the process, for there are quite a few examples too in which the stress is non-provective as in Connaught and Ulster Irish — *viosaitéir* /v'izit'e:r'/ (visitor), *costaiméir* /kosdim'e:r'/ (customer), and *traibhléir* /trav'l'e:r'/ (traveller) are examples, as is the at least two centuries old Cape Clear *smugléir* /smugl'e:r'/ (smuggler or smuggling ship).

As is to be expected, perhaps, the morphemic adaptation and blending borrowing process which we are discussing is highly productive in the semantic field of matters maritime in Cléire, and terms, some of them several generations old, abound: *cóstaeir*, a coaster or vessel which trades along the coast, rather than on the great oceans, and *trampaeir*, a tramper, or ocean-going vessel with no fixed route, and *cóstaeireacht* (coasting) and *trampaeireacht* (tramping) are examples, as are *fraeitéir*, a freighter or cargo-vessel, and *fraeitéireacht* (freighting), *logaeir*, a lugger or small vessel with lugsails, and *cotaeir*, a cutter or small vessel with one mast, a mainsail, a forestay sail and a jib set to bowsprit-end; and *stíméir* (steamer) and *stíméireacht* are of very high frequency of usage in Cape Clear speech ever since ocean-going steamers have been a reality, as are *trálaeir* (trawler) and *trálaeireacht* in their own case. We've already met *laidhnéir* rather than *línéar* (liner); a hooker, a 2-masted Dutch vessel, or a small fishing-smack, is *húcaeir*[10] in Cléire; *potaeir* is a lobster-pot fisher, and lobster-fishing is *potaeireacht* (rather than *gleamadóireacht/ gliomadóireacht* elsewhere, < *gliomach*, a lobster).

Further related lexical items are *druiftéir* (drifter) and *druiftéireacht* (drift-netting), *faeiléir* (whaler, whaling-ship), *faeiléireacht* (whaling, whalery), *tindéir* (a tender), *baidhléir* which we have already met, as in *baidhléir a' bháid*, the boiler of the boat, *findéir* (rather than *fiondar*) as in *findéir an árthaigh*, the fender of the vessel, *bornaeir* (burner),

buncaeir as in *buncaeirí guail*, coal bunkers, *steócaeir* (rather than *stócálaí*, stoker), *deampaeir* (damper), *steairtéir* (starter), *steapaeir* (stopper), *seoitéirí* (shutters), *vaeidéirí* (waders), *róibhéirí* in *róibhéirí an tseoil mhóir*, the rovers of the mainsail.

There is an assortment of terms too from various other categories such as occupations, trades and skills, work, machinery, fittings, implements, garments etc.: *plumaeir* rather than *pluiméir* (plumber), *digéir* (digger) and *vaiséir* (washer) are examples; both *slinneadóir* and *sléitéir* (slater) are used, as are *díonadóir* and *rúfaeir* (roofer); *deidhbhéir* (diver) corresponds to *draidhbhéir* (driver), and both *dróibhéir* and *tiománaí* (drover) are used, as are *dóirseoir* and *pórtaeir* (porter), and *rabaeirí, ropairí* and *bithiúnaigh* (robbers); *geaingéir* (ganger), *geaingstaeir* (gangster), *heaingéir* (hanger/hangar), *traeiléir* (trailer), *hocstaeir* (huckster), *sticéirí* (stickers) and *nicéirí* (knickers) are further examples, as are *clipéirí caorach* (sheep-clippers/shears), *clipéirí cinn* (hair-clippers) and *clipéirí pálach* (hedge-clippers); *vuincéirí* (winkers), *srian caoch* and *srian súlach* are interchangeable, and the workers fettler and buffer in motorcar manufacture in Cork city were *feitléir* and *bofaeir*, respectively, in Cléire; similarly shoppers, wasters and wafers are *siopaeirí, vaeistéirí* and *vaeiféirí* respectively while a speaker is *spéicéir*[11], a sniper in military parlance is *snaidhpéir*, and a striker, both in soccer parlance and in that of industrial disputes, is *straidhcéir*.[12]

There are relevant terms too for a few leisure activities : *bádaeir* and *bádaeireacht* we have already met; *strólaeirí* (strollers) and *strólaeireacht* (strolling) are further examples, as is *vácaeireacht* — as in the song 'Raghad-sa 's mo Chití a' vácaeireacht'[13] too. Some colloquial, slangy, and ephemeral terms in *-er* in English have been amenable to the process also : colloquial/slangy 'chefer' for chef and 'boser' for bosun (boatswain) have yielded *seiféir* (chef) and *seiféireacht*, and *bósaeir/babhsaeir* (bosun) for example in Cléire; a drunkard is *drúncaeir* (as well as *meisceoir*), a stinker is *stincéir*, (as well as *bréantán*), and a 'tenner' and a 'fiver' are *tinéir* and *faidhbhéir*, respectively, in Cléire. A few admirative terms too, applicable to women mainly, have been formed by the same process — *spórtaeir*, a 'sporter' e.g. in *sportaeir breá mná*, and *smeaiséir*, a 'smasher' e.g. in

smeaiséir mná/smeaiséirí ban, and *stiunaeir*, a 'stunner' e.g. in the vividly expressive *stiunaeir mná*.

Corcaíoch (a person from Cork) and *Cuan Dorach* (a person from Glandore) etc. are normal usage in Cléire as elsewhere. A 'Caper' or person from Cape Clear/Cléire however is *Céipéir*, and there are a few other examples also which accord similarly with our morphemic blending process : *Míodhrosaeir* (a person from Myros), *Luimnéir* (... from Limerick), *Dainginéir* (... from Dingle), *Meaincsaeir* (a 'Manxer'), *Bhueilséir* (a 'Welsher'), and *Deoitséirí* (Dutch).

You will have noticed, no doubt that in the formation of abstract and verbal nouns a further morpheme is added to the conjoined nativised and native morphemes. This too accords of course with Irish morphological structure in similar long-established cases : thus *cóstaeir-cóstaeireacht* accords with *foghlaeir - foghlaeireacht* for instance, *trampaeir - trampaeireacht* with *búistéir - búistéireacht*, and *potaeir - potaeireacht* with *siúinéir - siúinéireacht*.

The productivity of the morphemic blending process is such, indeed, that it allows the natural bilingual an almost Chomskyan-type rule-governed creativity even in the case of an urban popular terminology in English, so that just as a bluffer becomes *blofaeir*, for instance, so too a bouncer, in disco-speak, becomes *babhansaeir* as readily; and a stripper (not the bovine variety which is *gamhnach*, but the human one of prurience and titillation) is *struipéir*, a streaker is *struícéir*, and muggers are *mogaeirí*; and a pusher is *puiséir* so that drug-pushers, for instance, are *puiséirí drugaí*. Yes, the possibilities of the process are endless almost for the natural bilingual in language-contact situations — even in the party-political domain for instance, to take a further example, pollsters become *pólstaeirí*, and handlers *heaindléirí*, quite naturally and unselfconsciously.

Lovely blended lexemes all, you may well agree, i.e. when they are realised in speech with the phonetic values of the phonemes of Irish, when they accord with the sound system of Irish and with its grammatical system as well. *Deampaeir* /d'am'pe:r'/ (damper) and

fraeitéireacht /fre:'t'e:r'əxd/ (freighting) for instance are fine lexical items, and *drúncaeir* (drunkard), is, arguably, as good a lexeme as *meisceoir* (drunkard), and is infinitely better than it if the latter lexeme is spoken with the phonemes of English. No, I am not advocating the widespread and general adoption of the blended borrowings I have been describing[14], as things are, for *straidhcéir* then, for instance, would be 'strike air' in the speech of the great majority of learners of Irish (as *péintéir* is 'paint air') and this I couldn't contemplate with equanimity. Rather am I suggesting a change in attitude, a change in emphasis and direction instead.

As well as describing for you a particular variety of blended lexical borrowing which continues naturally and unselfconsciously in Gaeltacht speech, the continuation of a centuries-old process of lexical enrichment which continues to bestow a rich superstratum from English on the Irish language without deleterious consequences for the more structured levels of that language — the benign side, the beneficial side of Irish-English language-contact — I have also endeavoured to shed some light on the linguistic reality in the other and far larger area of language-contact to-day, the educational system and its efforts in school-bilingualism. I have mentioned heavy pidginisation and increasing creolisation, and to state it in its strong form now (though it grieves me to have to say this) what is being presided over by and large, I fear, albeit allowing for a very small number of important exceptions always, is the anglicisation of the Irish language itself, or at best, perhaps, the relexification of English towards Irish: there is the total dismantling of the sound system of Irish and the employment of that of the L1, English in its stead; and there is the dismantling too of most of the grammatical system and considerable convergence with that of English — learners often say, unthinkingly and linguistically naïvely, that Irish would be fine but for all the grammar, but so would swimming, I suppose, but for all the water; and there is the widespread preoccupation then with vocabulary and terminology, to the exclusion of the more highly structured levels of the language, as if language were merely words; *ach, mo léir, is fada ó theanga focail.*

Undue purism at the lexical level and the preoccupation with vocabulary and terminology in school-learnt Irish are carried to strange and often unnecessary extremes, even as the linguistic structure of the language as a whole is being replaced by that of English in the speech of most school bilinguals themselves. A Department of State in a newsletter in 1992, for instance, saw fit to use SEIF as a calque on the internationally known acronym AIDS. And *tomhaltóir*, for instance, which I have seen used for a consumer, in the commercial sense: though it may seem less opaque a term to the scholar of the language (who knows its *do-meil, ní tomil* genesis) than it does to the average learner, or even to the Gaeltacht native speaker of the language for that matter, nevertheless it seems to add rather unnecessarily to the linguistic load of the learners of the language. Wouldn't *cansúmaeir* perhaps be preferable provided that its borrowed morpheme is fully adapted to the sound system of Irish in the first place and provided too that the blend itself is not said as 'consume air'? After all, linguistic borrowing which enriches is possible at the lexical level and when the more highly structured levels hold firm. But should we change course, or is it too late now for that? Is it ever too late?

NOTES

[1] A lecture given at IRAAL International Conference on Language, Education and Society in a changing world, at the Marino Institute of Education, Dublin, June 1994. A somewhat altered version of this lecture has since been delivered at *Tionól 1994* of The School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.

[2] e.g. in lexical items such as *arm* (L. arma), *saighead* (sagitta), *sráid* (via strata), *sagart* (sacerdos), *aifreann* (offerenda), *leabhar* (liber) etc.

[3] e.g. *bainne, carraig, liathróid* etc.

[4] e.g. *cnaipe, iarla, ridire* etc.

[5] e.g. *garsún* (<garçoun > garçon), *seomra* etc.

[6] Earlier still *todochaide*.

[7] It has been said that *-éara* instead of *-éir*, e.g. in *feilméara* instead of *feilméir* (farmer) etc. in Conamara is a substitution of the genitive form for the nominative; vide Gearóid Mac Eoin, 'Genitive Forms as Nominatives in Irish', *ZCP* 33 (1974) 58-65 (63); I am grateful to Prof.

Seán Ó Coileáin for this reference and for other valuable suggestions; cf. also de Bhaldraithe T., 1953, *Gaeilge Chois Fharraige* 248.

[8] *Scinéir*, in the sense skinner/flayer of animals, is used in Cléire instead of the more usual *feannaire/feanntóir*.

[9] McCone K., McManus D. et al. (ed.) 1994, *Stair na Gaeilge* 218, 440.

[10] *húcaeir*, *cotaeir*, *stíméir* and some others were used in the (closely related) Irish of Béarra also.

[11] Already in the 17th. cen. 'Parliament' prose literature also: *Pairlement Chloinne Tomáis*, Williams N.J.A. ed., 1981, ll. 996, 1356, 1362 etc., *Párliament na mBan*, Ó Cuív B. ed. 1970, l. 1095; (cf idem ll. 70,80 *gabhairnéir* (governor); l. 2034-5, *traibhléireacht* (travelling); cf. *tráibhléireacht*, *Duanaire Dháibhidh Uí Bhruadair*, ed. Mac Erlean J.C. 1917, (iii) 150.8, and *traibléir*, *traibhléraidhe*, *The Flight of the Earls* (Tadhg Ó Cianáin) ed. Walsh P. 1916, 84.21, 70.16; cf. *an Bríbhéir* (The Brewer), Cromwell, and *Beacha an Bhríbhéara*, The Cromwellian settlers, Ó Bruadair, Mac Erlean ed. op. cit., 20.8; *bríbhéireacht* (brewing) *Dánta Aodhagáin Uí Rathaille*, Dinneen P. ed., 1900, 250.4)). *Spéicéir* also denoted a matchmaker in Béarra and in Cléire; *basadaeir* (< ambassador) denoted a matchmaker in Músgraí, and *stócach* in Corca Dhuibhne.

[12] *Straigiléir* (straggler) and *straigiléireacht* are used also in Cléire; cf. '*lucht taistil cnoc is sléibhte agus straigiléirí aonair*' in The Déise song 'Na Conairigh', *Nua-Dhuanaire* (iii), 28, Tomás Ó Concheanainn ed., 1978.

[13] *Válcaeireacht* in Corca Dhuibhne; both forms were used in Béarra.

[14] I wish to record my indebtedness and gratitude to my friends Micheál Ó Dálaigh (bail ó Dhia air) and the late Diarmaid and Donnchadh Shéamais Ó Drisceoil, and to many others from Cléire.

Teaching Irish to Americans: Focus on Feedback

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There is little agreement among researchers as to what form of corrective feedback teachers should employ to respond to student errors in second language writing. Teachers continue to use a variety of methods including more direct forms which are quite time consuming. In this paper I will attempt to show that preference for varying forms does not only exist on the part of researchers and instructors, but also with the students themselves. Teachers are sometimes pressured by students to provide forms of corrective feedback on compositions that they would not otherwise use. Students, as this paper will show, prefer forms of feedback that research has not proven to be more affective.

FEEDBACK FORMS

Before looking at the research in this area and my own findings, it is necessary to define the various feedback forms to which this paper will be referring. There are many different approaches and both teachers and peer critiques can be found using one approach on a rough draft and another on a second draft. For our purposes here we will only be analyzing teacher feedback and will take into consideration only pure forms of the following approaches. *Editing*, as I prefer to call it, can be viewed as a method in which the teacher writes in the corrections leaving the student little to do except recopy the corrections. *Symbols* can be defined as errors highlighted or circled and a code marked in the margin defining the type of error. *Circling* can be portrayed as just highlighting or circling the error. The student in this case would be provided with no information concerning the type of error. Lastly,

summary can be defined as comments at the end of an essay in which the reader responds to the message of the writer.
Editing is the most direct of feedback forms. It is often used with the understanding that the student would not be able to otherwise correct the errors. One of the difficulties with editing is that the teacher often misunderstands the meaning of the message and by correcting, distorts the student's expressed point of view.

Symbols and *circling* can be described as more indirect forms of feedback. They provide students with clues as to their errors. Instructors often use this approach hoping that students will develop skills to find and correct their own errors in the future. Symbols can also provide students with the opportunity to identify what types of errors commonly appear in their writing. However, students often lose the interpretive key for the symbols and many symbols are extremely vague. Lastly with the use of both symbols and circling, there appears to be a problem with responding to errors beyond the word or sentence level. The idea of circling an entire paragraph seems futile.

Summary comments may be one way of dealing with this problem. While such comments do not provide the location of errors in the text, they can comment on difficulties that involve a major portion of an essay. Also more frequent reoccurring errors at the word or sentence level can be discussed. Using this approach, the scorer can respond to the message of the writer taking full advantage of the communicative act.

RESEARCH INTO FEEDBACK FORMS

Research into these four approaches as well as other forms of feedback have not produced conclusive findings. Researchers such as Page (1958), Lalande (1982), and even Semke (1984) have claimed in their publications that certain approaches may affect students' learning more positively or more negatively than other approaches. Yet other researchers such as Stiff (1967), Hendrickson (1981), and Robb, Ross, and Shortreed (1986) published findings that showed no significance between correction approaches. I designed my own experiment with the participation of 72 ESL and linguistics students at Montclair State University in 1993, in which L1 and L2 students of English were

exposed to three forms of correction. No significance was found between treatments (Ihde 1993).

Two researchers, Brandl (1991) and DeKeyser (1993), have attempted to approach this question from a different viewpoint. Seeing that research has not been able to offer conclusive results on the feedback question, they have attempted to discover if separate treatments affect learners of varying achievement levels differently. Brandl did this by monitoring students' use of help functions while using a computer language program. High achievers, he found, made more frequent use of functions which would enable them to discover the answer themselves. This could be interpreted to mean that less direct forms of corrective feedback should be provided for high-achieving composition students.

DeKeyser, who focused on the oral aspect of language learning, hypothesized that students with high scores on the grammar pretest would improve with error correction and those with low scores on the grammar pretest would perform better without such corrections (1993; 505). Marginal significance was found for the written post-test, however this was not the case for the oral post-test. It seems in DeKeyser's study that extrinsic motivation and anxiety may have played a greater role than that of achievement levels.

RELATED RESEARCH

While carrying out a long-term experiment designed to incorporate questions raised by other researchers, I felt it would be valuable to survey both instructors and students as to their preference regarding feedback forms. While the second part of this paper will focus primarily on student preference, it is interesting to note the findings for a similar survey of teacher preference. During the summer of 1993, 49 ESL/EFL teachers responded to a questionnaire inquiring as to their correction practices. Twenty-eight of the respondents were French instructors of English following a summer course at Trinity College Dublin. The remaining twenty-two informants were American ESL instructors contacted through the Internet list TESL-L.

Results from this survey showed that while the majority of French instructors made use of symbols, the majority of American ESL teachers did not prefer any one approach. Thirty-eight percent of the American sample claimed to make use of circling, thirty-three percent maintained that they used symbols, and twenty-four and five percent claimed to use editing and summary techniques respectively. Very few Americans used summary comments and no French informants claimed use of this technique. Since process writing (White & Arndt 1991) seems to be gaining popularity in language learning classrooms, I also inquired as to use of rewrites. Seventy-eight percent of the French instructors answered that they did make use of them where as all of the American sample replied, "Yes" (Ihde [forthcoming]).

STUDENT PREFERENCES

First let us consider research in this specific area. Cathcart and Olsen 1976 found that ESL students wanted corrections to be made. Although their study involved oral language learning, their findings show that little has changed in the past twenty years. Many of their informants went as far as asking for every error to be corrected in oral production.

In 1991, Leki published results of research involving ESL students who were focusing on their writing skills. When questioning 100 ESL students at the University of Tennessee, she found that these students felt that 'good' writing was error-free writing. Due to this the informants wanted and expected all of their errors to be corrected. She suggested that many of the students may have expected all errors to be corrected due to their language learning experiences in their native country.

QUESTIONNAIRES

I decided to put the same questions I asked of the instructors and referred to earlier to second language learners. Due to my involvement with learners of the Irish language in the past (see Ihde 1994) I decided to question American learners of Irish on the topic of student preference. I did this in order to answer the following question: Would Americans learning a foreign language respond similarly as did Leki's ESL students in stating that they preferred more direct forms of feedback?

To carry out the research, University College Galway provided me with the names and addresses of 123 Americans who studied Irish in Galway for the past six summers. I tried to contact these learners by mail. Thirty-six of the letters were returned by the postal service, one addressee was deceased, and another did not answer the first question. The eighty-five remaining letters were understood to have arrived in the hands of Irish language learners. Of this 85, 45 were answered representing 53% of the sample.

FINDINGS

Students were asked to indicate how they would prefer to have their papers corrected by Irish language teachers. No informant claimed not to want any corrections. One participant or 2% chose summary, 18% circling, and 16% symbols. A total of 64% claimed they would prefer full editing on their essays.

Students supported their choice of full editing by making comments about teaching approaches, study habits, and the nature of a correct form. In general, respondents felt this was the most educational of approaches. Some felt it maximized learning by exposing students to correct forms of the target language. Some pointed out that students cannot always find the correct form even if the type and location of error are indicated. Others claimed that motivation and confidence are increased through use of full editing.

Regarding studying habits, some students claimed that due to the distance and infrequent contact with teachers, it was not always possible to have corrections checked by an instructor. If the correct form had been noted by the teacher the first time, corrections could be studied at a later date. In this case students claimed they would compare correct forms with their erroneous usage. Also, some felt that by having teachers provide full corrections, students could make better use of their language studying time.

Lastly, some students made general comments on the nature of correct forms. Several students felt they provided immediate and clear feedback. The corrections provided examples of proper usage in

context. And lastly, one student stated that since the use of a correct form was her 'goal', teachers should provide it without hesitation.

The smaller group of students who preferred symbols felt that they needed a clue as to the place and type, but that by correcting the error themselves benefits could follow. Most claimed they learned more by correcting their own errors. The process of correcting, some claimed, would help them avoid making the mistake again. Some felt it would lead to better understanding of why they were making these errors. Another student felt increased motivation when provided with the opportunity to correct her own errors.

Students who preferred circling gave many of the same answers as those who chose symbols. However one difference was placed on the use of grammar books and dictionaries. Those who chose circling felt that they would be better able to use such resources in the future to solve grammar difficulties. Lastly the one student who chose summary comments emphasized the importance of communicating her message to the teacher.

PROFICIENCY LEVELS

In addition to expressing preference for feedback forms, students were also asked to evaluate their proficiency level. In trying to discern if those with low levels of proficiency would prefer more direct forms of correction and those with high levels of proficiency would prefer more indirect forms of correction, I attempted to discover an indication of correlation. For those who described their oral ability as being able to speak and understand a few words, more than half chose editing. While those who claimed to be able to speak and understand most or all of what goes on in Irish claimed in equal proportions to prefer circling, symbols, and editing. Yet since these two groups represented the marginal extremes of the entire sample, a larger sampling would be needed to see if the trend remains.

Discussion

As with the Cathcart and Olsen's (1976) study and the Leki (1991) survey of ESL students, the above survey of Irish language students shows that the majority of students prefer full editing when teachers

correct their papers. The fact that such preference was stated for editing demonstrates a certain understanding of the learning process in general. Be it in mathematics, science, history, or language, many American students were educated in an era when there was only one right answer and that the teacher knew this answer.

Although many classrooms continue to function in this way, there has been an increasing understanding for higher order thinking skills. In some classrooms, teachers are encouraging students to engage in metacognitive exercises. It would seem that error corrective forms such as circling and symbols would encourage such activities. As some of the students commented on their questionnaires, figuring out why an error is an error may enable students to recognize what is happening when they speak and write. This in turn may aid students to develop strategies to overcome such difficulties in future writing samples (see Braungart-Bloom 1986).

CONCLUSION

It can be clearly seen that most learners of Irish as a foreign language want their instructors to fully correct all errors in their work. With this information we need to remember that such corrections are time-consuming for teachers and have not been proven to be any more effective than other less time-consuming approaches.

The question that many instructors of composition are left with is how to convey these findings to students without giving them the impression that the instructor is looking for an excuse to not do something he or she dislikes. Must teachers continue to make full corrections to justify their employment, to motivate their students, or to meet their students' expectations regardless of language learning findings? The answer to this question is "no".

Instructors need to provide their students with opportunities to experience other forms of corrections. This in itself may change expectations in the future. Motivational factors can also be readdressed so that success is experienced not in grammar perfection but in successful communication.

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Syntactic Typology and the Problem with Choosing One Analysis

Alan R. King

INTRODUCTION

In ordinary human life, something can be two different things at the same time. An underground train station can also be a wartime bomb shelter; an answer can be a question. Literature, among other human activities, thrives on simultaneous multiple interpretations, and perhaps similar acts are essential to the human cognitive process generally. Some current linguistic theories insist that the human language processing faculty, which theoretical models are trying to approximate in some sense, follows rules other than those of ordinary cognition. Yet even this premise need not imply an exclusively linear model of language processing.

A recent article on Somali's clause structure and syntactic typology by Saeed (1994) challenges the ordinary assumption that, in a Somali sentence translating "Ali gave the newspaper to the girl" (see (19) below), the phrases translating "Ali" "the newspaper" and "the girl" are arguments of the verb "gave"; instead, they are "satellites" standing outside the clause. The premise has theoretical repercussions for a description of Somali grammar.

In the following article I suggest that, granted that Saeed is right about "Ali" being a satellite "adjoined" to the above sentence, it still *is* the subject of the sentence in a way; both points of view may be simultaneously meaningful. If our ordinary cognition can handle this notion, then perhaps a linguistic model should too.

THREE MODELS OF CLAUSE STRUCTURE

Saeed (1994), having observed that Somali (Omo-Tana, Cushitic) superficially displays Hale's (1983) three characteristic features for nonconfigurational languages (free word order, discontinuity, heavy use of null anaphora), then shows that an alternative analysis can cast a different light on the language's structure, concluding that "the superficial identification of these Omo-Tana languages as nonconfigurational on the basis of Hale's criteria... breaks down under close examination into a much more complicated story".

This involves a radical reanalysis of Somali clause syntax wherein the predication is redefined almost to coincide with what in a traditional account might be called the verbal group (or verbal piece). In Principles and Parameters terms, according to Saeed's analysis only one lexical NP can appear under CP, namely a $NP_{[FOC]}$ in Spec position, all other overt NPs having been relegated to the status of "freely adjoined" TOPICs (or "satellites"). Various preverbal clitics which double satellite NPs constitute technically the predication's arguments, whereupon a "typologically familiar" strictly SOV clause structure emerges. The satellite NPs, "freely" ordered and case-marked, "cannot be assigned case configurationality, and we will assume that they inherit case from the clitic pronoun in argument position".

This bold redrawing of Somali clause syntax actually contains considerable grammatical insight, yet is intuitively difficult to accept that, on such a general scale, NPs constituting the semantic arguments of clauses are structurally not arguments. Saeed's identification of all such constituents as "topics" devalues to the point of meaninglessness the pragmatically sound concept of topicality. The analysis also threatens to empty of any substantive meaning some familiar grammatical terms such as "NP", applied in Saeed's analysis to the preverbal clitics.

From a functional or practical viewpoint, ideally we would like to retain both the advantages of the conventional *whole-clause view* of the Somali sentence and also the structural insights inherent in Saeed's *clause-plus-satellite* model (as I shall henceforth call it for short). Unfortunately, the Chomskyan framework, far from allowing the last-

mentioned problem to be expressed in formal terms, forces us to choose one analysis, either Saeed's or the traditional one. Yet in intuitive terms at least, the evidence in favour of a *clause-plus-satellite* analysis for Somali does not necessarily invalidate the conventional whole-clause concept. Again intuitively (in the absence of a formal framework that is ready to accommodate such a notion), each Somali clause possibly has two structures, one of which refers to Saeed's inner or nuclear clause, while the other structure is that of the extended or whole clause. These could each have independent structural characteristics, while case marking on peripheral NPs and person marking in the necleus would assist their referential mapping onto each other. I will call what I have just described a *nucleate* model.

We thus have three alternative ways of viewing the Somali sentence:

(a) In the traditional *whole-clause* analysis, the clause consists of a verbal group and its (lexical) NP arguments.

(b) In Saeed's *clause-plus-satellite* analysis, the clause *is* the verbal group--either alone, or with one (focused) lexical NP. All other lexical NPs present are satellites.

(c) In the *nucleate* analysis proposed here, both these structures are recognised as applicable to the data. Each is clause-like in certain respects:

THE NUCLEAR CLAUSE:

* contains all syntactically obligatory clause components;
* can constitute the whole clause, because peripheral elements are optional;
* normally must be present;
* is constituted independently of the whole clause, i.e. is not affected by the actual presence or absence of peripheral NPs (because of doubling);
* has certain "familiar" syntactic attributes, e.g. may admit a "configurational" analysis.

THE WHOLE CLAUSE:

* has propositional/semantic attributes, such as full lexical content;
* has discourse/pragmatic attributes, including information structure (topic and focus functions);
* freely incorporates lexical arguments;
* has case-marked NPs.

BOTH NUCLEAR AND WHOLE CLAUSES:

* contain a predicate;
* specify arguments; and
* incorporate TAM markers (INFL).

In a non-formal way, then, the present paper supports Saeed's assessment that "a two-value parameter of configurationality is too simple to reflect the facts". Below I shall argue that a system like that of Somali can be viewed as part of a well-attested typological continuum. A nucleate or bistructural clause analysis may also be needed to describe some languages to which the arguments invoked by Saeed to justify describing Somali in terms of the *clause-plus-satellite* model alone may not apply.

After looking more closely at this idea, I will concentrate on two arguments developed by Saeed in support of a *clause-plus-satellite* view of Somali, concerning (a) the nature of the preverbal person morphemes (clitic pronouns or agreement markers?) and (b) the syntax of Somali's main focus construction. Regarding (a), I shall maintain that for some languages the "correct" characterisation of such elements itself hinges on the choice of clause analysis and therefore cannot be a decisive criterion for determining the latter in such languages. As for (b), I shall point out that the aspects of behaviour of the Somali focus construction alluded to by Saeed are well explained by reference to the construction's relationship to relative clause structures via the grammaticalisation of cleft-like constructions. Given that very similar developments can be observed in typologically unrelated languages, e.g. Welsh (Celtic, Indo-European) and Hawaiian (Polynesian, Austronesian), the presence of these phenomena in Somali is probably not symptomatically related to

the general features of Somali's clause syntax under consideration. But first, how do nucleate clauses work?

ON NUCLEATE CLAUSES

From an Indo-European linguistics perspective, we are accustomed to thinking of case relations as directly affecting NPs and being signalled through these, whether via word order as in English or formal tagging as in Latin. Yet such relations hold between two parts, an NP and a verb, and may just as well be indexed on the latter. Thus in Basque, a European isolate language, the indexing in a finite verb differentiates between direct and indirect objects:

(1) a. *Bidali nuen.*
sent AUX
"I sent her/him,"
b. *Bidali nion.*
sent AUX
"I sent it to her/him,"

while also specifying the number and person of each:

(2) a. *Bidali nituen.*
"I sent them,"
b. *Bidali nien.*
"I sent it to them,"
c. *Bidali nizkion*
"I sent them to her/him,"

etc. Now (1a-b) and (2a-c) are all complete, well-formed sentences. The arguments are not represented by NPs, but indexed by markers within the verbal group. When such a sentence is optionally expanded by allowing one or more NPs to appear overtly, the necleus remains unchanged and the NPs, appropriately case-marked and agreeing in person and number with the indices, are positioned "freely", giving rise to examples like (3b-f):[1]

(3) a. *Bidali zion.*
sent AUX
"She/He sent it to her/him."

b. *Mikelek neskari liburua bidali zion.*
Mikel-ERG girl-DAT book-ABS sent AUX
"Mikel sent the girl the book."
c. *Neskari liburua bidali zion Mikelek.*
d. *Liburua Mikelek neskari bidali zion.*
e. *Liburua bidali zion neskari Mikelek.*
f. *Bidali zion Mikelek neskari liburua.* "ditto"

The optionality of occurrence and freedom of placement of Basque NPs contrasts sharply with the obligatory nature and fixed positions of components of the verbal group. Non-third-person arguments are marked as in (4):

(4)

	Prefix	suffix
1s	*n-*	*-t, -da*
2s	*h-*	*-k, -n, -a, -na*
1p	*g-*	*-gu*
2p	*z-*	*-zu*

The rules determining when the prefixed markers and when the suffixed markers must be used are rather complicated (King 1993;158f.), but a major factor is the grammatical role of the argument to which a marker corresponds.[2]

Thus, it is not necessary for first or second person personal pronouns in subject or object function to appear explicitly unless their presence is required for topicalization, focusing, or some other emphatic or stylistic purpose. For example, (5a) and (6a) without *ni* "I, me" are less marked and more usual than (5b) and (6b) with it:

(5) a. *Bihar joango n-aiz.*
tomorrow go-FUT I-am
"I'll go tomorrow."
b. *Ni bihar joango n-aiz.*
I-(ABS) tomorrow go-FUT I-am
"I'll go tomorrow."

(6) a. *Irakasleak ezagutzen n-au.*
teacher-ERG know-IPF me-has
"The teacher knows me."
b. *Irakasleak ni ezagutzen n-au.*
teacher-ERG me- (ABS) know-IPF me-has
"ditto"

The various positions for NP arguments are not pragmatically interchangeable. Some orders are unmarked, notably SOV (De Rijk 1969). Subordinate clauses also tend to gravitate towards SOV order (Salaburu 1987). Another curtailment of word-order freedom arises from the impossibility of beginning a clause with an unprefixed, synthetically conjugated finite verb. Periphrastic *joango naiz* "I will go" may stand clause-initially as in (7), but synthetic *noa* "I am going" in (8) may not:

(7) a. *Bihar joango naiz.*
tomorrow go-FUT I-am
"I'll go tomorrow."
b. *Joango naiz bihar.*
"ditto"

(8) a. *Bihar noa*
tomorrow I-go
"I'm going tomorrow."
b. **Noa bihar.*

Moreover, a clause constituent may only immediately precede a plain synthetic verb form, as in (7a), if focused. If no constituent is focused, a synthetic verb form in an affirmative clause is preceded by a prefix *ba-* (King 1994:344).[3] Both (9a) and (9b) are then possible word orders:

(9) a. *Bihar banoa.*
"Tomorrow, I'm leaving."
b. *Banoa bihar.*
"I'm leaving tomorrow (I really am)."

The emphatic topic position is clause-initial, while focused constituents immediately precede the verb (Altube 1929). One feature of Basque grammar making word-order "scrambling" of arguments possible without loss of information is the explicit marking of NPs for case by means of suffixes; while a second way in which Basque syntax welds the constituents of a clause together is through the obligatory person and number indices in the conjugated element of each finite verb that have already been mentioned. Compare (10a-c):

(10) a. *Ikasle batzuk irakasle hori ezagutzen du -te.*
pupil some-ERG teacher that-(ABS) know AUX-NUM
"Some pupils know that teacher."

b. *Irakasle horrek itasle batzu ezagutzen d-it-u.*
teacher that-ERG pupil some-(ABS) know AUX-NUM
"That teacher knows some pupils."

c. *Ikasle batzuk irakasle guztiak ezagutzen d-it-uz-te.*
pupil some-ERG teacher all-PLU-(ABS) know AUX-NUM-NUM
"Some pupils know all the teachers."

Thus in (10a), for instance, it would be clear from the auxiliary form that the plural "pupils" must be the subject and the singular "teacher" the object, rather than vice-versa, even if Basque did not also encode that information through case marking.[4]

These considerations may lead us, like Saeed (1994) for Somali, to ask whether

(a) a Basque sentence, in line with the traditional view, consists of a verb and a number of "freely" -ordered NP arguments, with potentially redundant marking of case on the NPs and agreement on the verb (the whole-clause view);

or if

(b) the real arguments of a Basque clause are constituted by the markers within the verbal group themselves, with the lexical NP arguments constituting optional satellites "freely adjoined" to a reduced clause (the clause-and-satellite view).[5]

Position (b) would involve treating the person markers in the verbal group as pronouns synchronically (that they might "be" so diachronically is not at issue here), rather than as agreement markers. In fact, no analysis in such terms has been contemplated by Basque grammarians and it is doubtful whether it is likely to be in the future, because its adoption would create more problems than it solved. If the verbal person markers are NPs, these are so radically different in form and behaviour from lexical NPs as to make the claim that they belong to the same category hardly tenable. Other problems might be the place of the non-conjugated part of periphrastic verb forms in the analysis, and the treatment of focused constituents. Yet despite these difficulties, as *one perspective among others*, such a view is not without interest.

Basque and Somali clause structure (Saeed 1987, 1994) share a number of general features relevant to the present discussion. Somali word order is "free", but with special treatment of focused constituents. NPs are casemarked, while the verbal group contains clitic elements indicating the person and number of most arguments.[6] The latter are obligatory and their position is fixed, whereas NP arguments are optional and their position is free.

Differences between Basque and Somali include the following two points.

Realisation of verbal agreement.
Somali verbal groups, apart from morphological agreement with their subject through suffixed or prefixed verbal inflections (Saeed 1987:58f.), have a system of obligatory clitic elements, such as *-uu* "3s. subject", *-ay* "3p. subject", *ku* "2s. object", *noo* "for us", etc., which precede the synthetic verb form. As in Basque, third person objects are realised by zero, for example:

(11) a. *W- uu ku arkay.*
CM-he you saw
"He saw you."
b. *W- uu Ø arkay.*
CM-he saw
"He saw him/her/it."

Saeed (1993, 1994) calls these elements pronominal clitics rather than agreement affixes, although he recognises that they might represent "an intermediate stage in the development of a secondary (more comprehensive) system of agreement".

Behaviour of focused constituents.
Focused NPs in Somali, occurring to the left of the verb and followed by a special marker (*ay[aa]* in (12)), are *not* doubled by a person-marking object clitic (Saeed 1994:60, 64):

(12) *Adiga ay- ay (*ku) garteen.*
you FOC-they recognised.
"They recognised you."

Saeed accounts for the special behaviour of focused NPs by holding that they, unlike other NPs, belong to the nuclear clause (see above).

In Basque, on the contrary, the agreement morphemes are neither clitics nor pronouns but mere affixes, which appear for both focused and non-focused NPs. Given that some of the arguments for a full-fledged *clause-and-satellite* analysis of Somali thus cannot be extended to Basque, one conclusion might be that despite considerable apparent overall similarity in their clause structures, Basque and Somali will receive radically different syntactic analyses, perhaps even implying that Somali syntax is configurational while Basque syntax is not. This is intuitively unsatisfying.

Yimas, a Papuan language of the Lower Sepik family (Foley & Van Valin 1984, Foley 1986), seems to represent a language type that applies the *clause-and-satellite* principle, proposed by Saeed for Somali, more thoroughly than Somali itself. The order of NPs is "free", although

verb-final clauses are common. Verbal groups are fully indexed by means of prefixes for all except some oblique arguments. In Foley's (1986) words, "In Yimas, the core nominals are simply in apposition to the verb [i.e. the verbal group], which alone is obligatory to the clause... It is not surprising, then, that in the great majority of Yimas clauses the verb occurs without any associated nominals at all." "If the clause is to contain associated nominals, they can be added, in any order, according to constraints that may be imposed by the verb. Peripheral [i.e. oblique] nominals, like locatives or temporals, may be freely added... Core nominals, like actor and undergoer, are more restricted. They may be added subject to the proviso that their specifications for person, number and class agree with one of the verbal prefixes for core arguments."

Despite these coincidences in clause organisation, Yimas differs interestingly from both Somali and Basque in certain significant respects.

Case marking.
Yimas subject, object (direct or indirect) and benefactive NPs, called "core nominals" by Foley, which are indexed in the verbal group, are not case-marked; only unindexed oblique ("peripheral") NPs take a case suffix.

Noun classes.
Yimas nouns are divided into a number of agreement classes somewhat reminiscent of Bantu languages. There are around a dozen noun-classes, and the indices contained in verbal groups must agree with subjects and objects in class as well as number and person. There are male, female, nonhuman-animate, and plant classes; other nouns are classified according to phonological criteria, so for example nouns ending in *-mp*, such as *impramp* "basket", belong to the *-mp* class (Foley's class VII).

Theoretically the fact that Yimas satellite NPs are not case-marked is compatible with the clause-peripheral syntactic role Foley claims for them. Presumably the non-marking of NPs for case and the more efficient indexing of arguments in the verbal group, due to the rich system of noun classes, are functionally related phenomena. In

principle this "pure-indexing" arrangement is systematically less redundant than that of Somali and Basque with their janus-like double signalling (verbal indexing *and* NP case-tagging).

AGREEMENT MARKERS OR PRONOUNS?

Saeed (1994) states that the preverbal person morphemes in Somali are pronominal clitics, not agreement affixes. The point contributes to his position that these constitute the Somali verb's real arguments. He is interested in establishing, for the sake of the formal clause-plus-satellite analysis, that they are nominal elements, i.e. pronouns, and hence also that they are not mere affixes but clitics. On the other hand, not all clitics are pronouns, so for any other position it is unimportant what morphophonological form the person morphemes take. In Basque and Yimas they are clearly affixes, whereas Kiribati subject markers and Macedonian object markers are *agreement clitics*. What matters most is their syntactic function. Agreement markers co-occur with, and index, coreferential NPs, whereas when clitic and non-clitic forms of a pronoun coexist paradigmatically, such pairs are often syntactically in complementary distribution.[7]

This criterion is expressed from a whole-clause perspective, without using the "satellite" concept. Granted that the Somali elements are indeed formally clitics, the way we state their syntactic function apparently depends on whether a *whole-clause* or a *clause-and-satellite* view of the grammatical system is taken, rather than vice-versa.

In Kiribati, an Oceanic (Austronesian) language spoken in Micronesia, which does not display nonconfigurational features, grammatical case relations are not marked morphologically on NPs, but are signalled by VOS word order, e.g. (Bingham 1945; in my gloss, SM = subject marker, OM = object marker):

(13) *E karao-a te bata te aomata.*
SM make -OM ART house ART man
"The man builds the house."

Number is usually signalled in NPs; for example, the singular article *te* contrasts with the plural article, realised as zero:

(14) a. *E na nako te aomata.*
SM ASP go ART man
"The man will go."
b. *A na nako Ø aomata..*
SM ASP go (PLUR_ART) man
"The men will go."

The number and person of the subject is reflected by the choice of a clause-initial clitic, which I will call a *subject marker* (SM). Kiribati subject markers are obligatory and have a fixed position preceding the verb or the preverbal aspect marker if one is present (in what is nonetheless a strictly VOS language). It is not necessary for the NP with which the subject marker agrees to be present; thus besides (14a), (15a) is possible, but not (15b):

(15) a. *E na nako.*
"She/He will go."
b. **Na nako te aomata..*

Personal pronoun NPs behave like other NPs. Therefore both (16a)-the unmarked sentence--and (16b) are grammatical, but (16c) is not (Anonymous 1951:31):

(16) a. *N na nako*
SM ASP go
"I will go."

b. *N na nako ngai.*
SM ASP go I
"I (myself) will go."
c. **Na nako ngai.*
ASP go I

Kiribati transitive verbs are also followed by suffixed *object markers* (OM): see example (13) above. Like subject markers, these are obligatory, have a fixed position relative to the verb, and agree with their referent, the verb's object, in number and person, regardless of whether the latter is explicitly present.

Mid-century grammars of Kiribati refer to the items I call subject markers as *nominative pronouns* (Bingham 1945:25) or *subjective pronouns* (Anonymous 1951:31); according to the same authorities, the object markers are *objective pronouns*. The same grammars call *ngai* an *emphatic pronoun*.

Serb-Croat and Macedonian, neighbouring Slavonic languages on the Balkan Peninsula, present a good example of related languages sharing very similar clitic morphemes which function syntactically in quite different ways. In Croatian (Norris 1993) they are straightforward pronouns, and there is no clitic doubling of either pronouns or noun NPs:

(17) a. *Vidim ga.*
I-see him
"I see him."
b. *Vidim Rudolfa.*
I-see Rudolf
"I see Rudolf."
c. *Njega vidim.*
him I-see
"I see him."

Ga and *njega* are the clitic and non-clitic forms of the pronoun "him"; (17a) is the usual, unmarked form of "I see him", while (17c) is marked.

In Macedonian (Lyons 1990), however, where the cognate forms are *go* and *nego* respectively, there is obligatory clitic doubling of definite object NPs and all indirect ones (word order also differs from Serbo-Croat):

(18) a. *Marija go poznava.*
"Marija knows him."
b. *Go vidov Grozdana.*
"I saw Grozdan."
c. *Marija go poznava nego.*
"Marija knows him."

Independently of morphophonological form, there is therefore reason to consider that, in turning its clitic object pronouns into clitic agreement markers, Macedonian may have reorganised its overall clause structure.[8]

FOCUSED NOUN PHRASES

In Somali, focused NPs (a) are followed by a focus marker (FOC) *baa* or *ayaa*, (b) are always in the absolutive case form, (c) are not doubled by the usual pronominal clitic, (d) command only "restricted" morphological agreement in the verb, and (e) reject the usual declarative clause marker (CM, or classifier in Saeed's terminology), *w[aa]* (Saeed 1987, 1994):

(19) a. *Cali wargeyskii w- uu siiyey inantii.*
Ali the-newspaper CM-he gave the-girl
"Ali gave the newspaper to the girl."
b. *Cali baa wargeyskii siiyey inatii.*
Ali FOC the-newspaper gave the-girl
"Ali gave the newspaper to the girl."

See also (12) above. Although focused non-subjects take no doubling clitic, given that third person is represented by zero in the object clitic paradigm this could also be analysed as third-person agreement if wished (see below).

These Somali focus phenomena, although idiosyncratic at first sight, actually constitute a recognisable pattern common to numerous other languages not necessarily sharing Somali's specific features of clause organisation at all. This suggests that rather than being the product of the *clause-and-satellite* structure of Somali clauses, as suggested by Saeed, the conjunction of these features within Somali may, typologically, be fairly coincidental.

In Welsh, a superficially VSO language with no nonconfigurational features, some personal pronouns vary in form according to grammatical role. Focused subject pronouns take an "independent" form (e.g. *fi* "I, me") rather than the normal subject form (*i* "I"). Compare:

(20) a. *Fe brynais i fara.*
CM bought-1s I bread
"I bought bread."
b. *Fi brynodd fara.*
I (FOC) bought-3s bread
"I bought bread."

Focused NPs, unlike non-focused arguments, must occur to the left of the verb. There is normally subject agreement in Welsh (e.g. *brynais* "I-bought"), but verbs with a focused subject do not agree in person or number, simply taking the third-person-singular form (*brynodd* "she/he-bought") (Jones & Thomas 1977:292). The preverbal clause marker *fe*, signalling declarative-affirmative clause type, is absent from focus sentences.

Parallels with the Somali focus construction are obvious, and they can all be accounted for once the focus construction is analysed as a reduced and grammaticalised type of cleft construction with ellipsis.[9] If (20b) is an elliptical version of (21) (in English paraphrase):

(21) *(It was) I/me (who) bought bread.*

it is seen at once why "I/me" is in predicative or independent rather than subject form and why the verb "bought" could be in a third-person-singular ("reduced agreement") form. Given that relative clauses in Welsh do not take the affirmative clause marker *fe*, its absence from the focus construction is equally accounted for in this way. (Likewise, Somali relative clauses do not have *waa*.)

Another VSO language which uses a grammaticalised pseudo-cleft construction to express focus is Hawaiian (King n.d.). Focused NPs, placed on the left of the verb, may lack the usual prepositional case marker, while the verbal group is marked not as in other declarative clauses but as in subordinate clauses (Elbert & Pukui 1979).

Saeed (1984) recognises the evident relationship between the focus construction and the relative clause in Somali. Examples of similar constructions elsewhere with parallel consequences, despite

considerable overall typological differences from Somali, may imply that these phenomena should not be treated as strongly symptomatic of a *clause-plus-satellite* system, as suggested by Saeed (1994).

CONCLUSION

The *clause-plus-satellite* view developed by Saeed (1994) contains a useful syntactic insight, yet as formulated requires a counter-intuitive abandonment of the time-honoured *whole-clause* perspective. Furthermore, his analysis is more difficult to sustain formally in languages like Basque or Yimas which, while displaying considerable affinity in their apparent principles of clause organisation, have non-lexical affixes in place of Somali's clitic-type nuclear person morphemes. Yet the Kiribati and Macedonian examples illustrate the importance of giving priority to syntactic function over morphological appearance in evaluating so-called clitic pronouns. Finally, I have questioned the relevance attached to the syntax of focus in Saeed's exposition, given that comparable patterns are found even in languages such as Welsh and Hawaiian with no typological affinity to Somali.

Most theoretical approaches to syntactic analysis demand, in principle, straightforward answers to straightforward questions; yet language is perhaps not always structured in a straightforward way. Here I have not produced a conclusive demonstration that any particular language has double or nucleate clause structure; the question merely remains open. What I hope to have shown, however, is that the flexibility of viewpoint inherent to such an approach as the nucleate view, for all its eclecticism, may lead to more meaningful and insightful language typologies and descriptions.

NOTES

1. For a structurally similar sentence Euskaltzaindia (1991:357) lists twenty-four possible word orders, i.e. all possible permutations of the four elements. Basque, like Somali, is sometimes said to be non-configurational. The debate has so far not been conclusive: see *inter alia* de Rijk 1978, Levin 1989, Rebuschi 1989, or for a general review (in Basque), Eguzkitza & Ortiz de Urbina 1987.

2. Third-person arguments may be either sometimes or always zero-marked in the verb form, depending on the morphological analysis chosen by each grammarian (Lafon 1955 and 1961, Trask 1977 and 1981, Saltarelli 1988, Euskaltzaindia 1987).

3. "Affirmative" *ba-* thus seems to be comparable to Somali *waa* and Welsh *fe*, for which see below.

4. It is conceivable that the spreading "vulgarism" consisting of omitting ergative case markers, creating potential ambiguity between subjects and direct objects, may be "licensed" by this circumstance. The same could apply to established absolutive-ergative syncretisms such as standard *hauek* "these (absolutive/ergative)" or traditional western *-ak* "absolutive/ergative plural".

5. One significant difference between the Somali and Basque systems not mentioned so far is that whereas in Somali oblique ("adpositional") arguments are also indexed in the verbal group, in Basque such arguments are not indexed and must be represented in the whole clause by NPs with special case markers or postpositions.

6. This is really an oversimplification. Details regarding the occurrence and placement of subject clitics (Saeed 1987) leave some doubt as to whether these fall into the same class as non-subject clitics.

7. Again I am simplifying; the above statement takes no account of various intermediate systems such as those of Spanish, Rumanian or Greek clitic pronouns. In Modern Greek, for example, according to Warburton (1976), optional clitic doubling for object NPs has a "pragmatic" function.

8. In this context it is most interesting to observe that Macedonian has lost the common Slavic system of case suffixes for nouns. A direct object in Serbo-Croat takes an accusative case form; in Macedonian it takes none, but (if it is definite) an agreement clitic, e.g. *go* above, will index it for number, gender and person. Bulgarian seems to

represent an intermediate stage between the Serbo-Croat and Macedonian types in this respect (Lyons 1990:54, note 13). In Bulgarian, which has also lost its case markers, doubling only occurs with fronted objects and even then is only optional.

9. Perhaps *ex-cleft* would be a better term, to emphasise that the construction in question has evolved from a transparent cleft structure rather than being one synchronically. In both Somali and Welsh there exists the alternative of using an unevolved or less grammaticalised explicit cleft construction (formed with *waxa* in Somali, Saeed 1987:213) for stronger focusing. Simplifing, the latter could be considered the pragmatic equivalent of English cleft focus constructions, whereas "ex-cleft"-construction sentences correspond to English sentences where focus is signalled by intonation alone.

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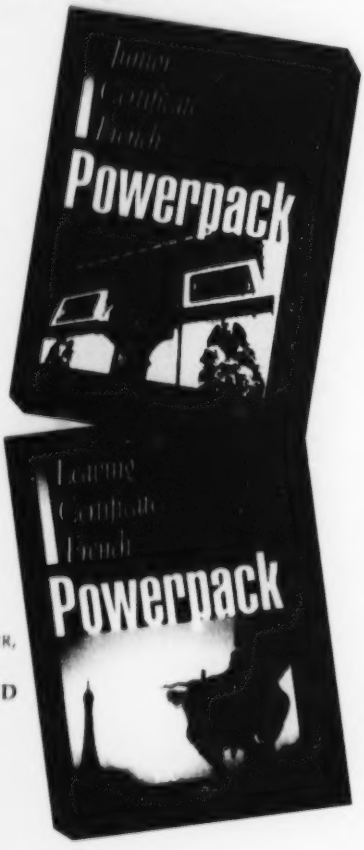

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Avoidance or Some Other Strategy: A Case for the Passive in Arabic and English[1]

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INTRODUCTION

This article discusses whether avoidance is an appropriate term to describe the linguistic behaviour in which the learner tries to underproduce a certain L2-structure (Schachter 1974, Kleinmann 1977, 1978). The term is defined as a genuine strategy resulting from the learner's realization that particular forms of input data are avoided simply because they are difficult to reorganize in the output, and thus an alternative strategy is employed to fill the gap. Yet this does not imply 'ignorance' of the avoided form, as misinterpreted by James (1980)[2]. Rather, the learner is said to have some sort of knowledge because it is obvious that one cannot avoid what one does not know (Seliger 1989). Hence, an attempt will be made to identify the sorts of knowledge that may lead to the nonuse of a given L2-structure, or to its use but with erroneous manifestations, since recent research has shown that even Schachter's original study provides inadequate insights into avoidance (Kamimoto *et al.* 1992). Further, Kleinmann's account, particularly of the passive in the case of Arabic learners of English, will be reconsidered in the light of this identification and the frequency differences in the passive between Arabic and English. The article does not, of course, claim to provide an alternative methodology for the exploration of avoidance, as the problem of defining the phenomenon in linguistics terms as I have been doing in this paper still remains. It may well be the case with Schachter and Kleinmann's data that the learner's

internalised knowledge of the pragmatic limitations of a given structure in L1 may actively dissuade them fro producing its counterpart in L2. Whether one should call this avoidance or some other strategy is a highly controversial issue.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL REALITY OF THE PHENOMENON

First and foremost, avoidance, as defined by behaviourists, should be perceived as a potentially positive strategy in the sense that it constitutes a necessary precondition for successful behaviour (i.e. learning). Avoidance, in and of itself, may seem negative to some L2-acquisition researchers simply because it involves 'negative' contingencies and 'passive' behaviour towards aversive situations.

In seventeenth-century philosophy the Cartesian version of dualism classified human behaviour into two classes: **involuntary actions** (or reflexes) which normally proceed in response to external stimuli; and **voluntary actions** which do not have to be triggered by external stimulation, but occur as a reflection of the individual's conscious choice to act in a certain way. From this version arose two central issues concerning the human mind as a nonphysical entity generating the 'physical movements' in voluntary behaviour. First, the **contents of the mind**: Descartes attributed some of these contents directly to sense experience, and others to certain ideas that are both innate and independent from worldly experience (nativism). In contrast, Locke maintained that all ideas were acquired directly or indirectly through experience after birth; the mind was thus considered to come into being as a tabula rasa (empiricism). Second, **the workings of the mind**: Descartes believed that the mind did not operate in a predictable and systematic manner in accordance with discoverable laws. On the other hand, Hobbes, who denied neither the Cartesian version of dualism nor its particular stress on the mind's constant control over voluntary behaviour, contended that the mind functioned as predictably and lawfully as reflex mechanisms. The crucial point here is Hobbes' identification of this constant control with 'pursuit of pleasure and *avoidance* of pain', a seemingly unavoidable principle that was recognized as one variant of a more general principle called hedonism (cf. Domjan and Burkhard 1993:4f). As a mere fact of life, this principle

is still applicable to normalize instantaneously the way the mind 'initiates' voluntary behaviour, leaving behind the reverse direction (i.e. avoidance of pleasure and pursuit of pain) to abnormal conditions such as masochism.

Recall for the moment that the learner avoids a given L2-structure because he/she finds it difficult (i.e. painful) to process. Had the learner tried to utilize contumaciously an L2-structure known to be difficult/painful at a certain stage of learning, he/she would have behaved in a linguistically masochistic way at that stage of learning.

Seen as one type of instrumental aversive control, avoidance conditioning tends to increase the performance of target bearing, viz. the occurrence of instrumental behaviour. In such a case the organism learns how to minimize expected contact with aversive stimulation, a fact of life that affects all sorts of behaviour, including language learning where the occurrence of instrumental behaviour is seen in terms of a **temporary compensation** to steer clear of a negative contingency between what the learner **ought to do** and the aversive situation created by the avoided form. One must be extremely cautious not to confuse avoidance strategies with the escape strategies that may precede but may not follow them, even though both are types of instrumental aversive control (or negative reinforcement). Escape strategies, the simplest instances of negative reinforcement, dictate that the aversive stimulus (S) is continuously present but can be *terminated* by the instrumental response (R); whereas in the case of avoidance the aversive S is 'scheduled' to occur sometime in the future, and is thus *prevented* or *delayed* by the instrumental R (Domjan and Burkhard 1993:137f).

More explicitly, people escape from aversive circumstances which are already present, but avoid **potential** aversive circumstances that have not yet been present. Avoidance, therefore, presupposes a sufficiently unmistakable force of prediction, an inner force which enables the avoider to successfully realize the extent of the affective state (pain, fear, etc.) when the aversive S is likely to occur. Prevention or delay of this occurrence is evidence of the avoider's **intuitive knowledge** of both

the situation created by the aversive S and the *natural R* replaced by the *instrumental R* through the avoidance trial. In language learning this means intuitive knowledge of both the avoided structure and the aversive context which requires its use. The *natural R* is the avoided structure itself and the *instrumental R* is the alternative strategy (i.e. paraphrase) that the learner resorts to for filling the gap. Given the important distinction between escape (termination of aversive Ss) and avoidance (prevention or delay of aversive Ss), a further distinction must then be made between prevention and delay to illustrate the positive role of avoidance in social practice and language learning respectively. While **prevention** may well entail *habituation* of the avoidance trial whereby the possibility of producing the natural R decreases, **delay** implies *sensitization* of the natural R, and thus its *activation*, at a later stage, particularly when the aversiveness of the S that triggers the avoidance trial is overpowered. Clearly, the former type of avoidance would result in *permanent* attempts to prevent difficulty/pain in social practice, and the latter in temporary attempts to delay difficulty/pain in language learning.

It is therefore the implication of **delay** that must be understood as the ultimate mechanism underlying the avoidance of a given L2-structure. Whether or not this implication was meritorious or desirable was not an issue for Schachter, Kleinmann, and others, since the learner's **intuitive knowledge** of the avoided items or rules was not explained in any perceivable way.

Recall, again, that delay suggests intuitive knowledge of both the avoided structure and the aversive context which requires its use. Now if the learner's nonuse of a given L2-structure can indeed be called avoidance, then this would entail his/her intuitive knowledge of both the linguistic and pragmatic properties of that structure.

THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL REALITY OF THE PHENOMENON

By **intuitive knowledge** I mean a direct relation between the learner's mind and the avoided structure as perceived unambiguously. The term 'intuition' in this sense is familiar in rationalist philosophy, particularly in the sense intended by Bergson, where **intuitive knowledge** is seen as

a mental process of knowing something as it is in itself. Bergson contrasts this process with what is called 'intellect' or **intellectual knowledge**, a further mental process which helps manipulate the thing being talked about (its form, meaning, etc.) for intentional purposes of action. That is, the capacity of 'intellect' is *practical*, whereas the capacity of 'intuition' is *impractical*[3].

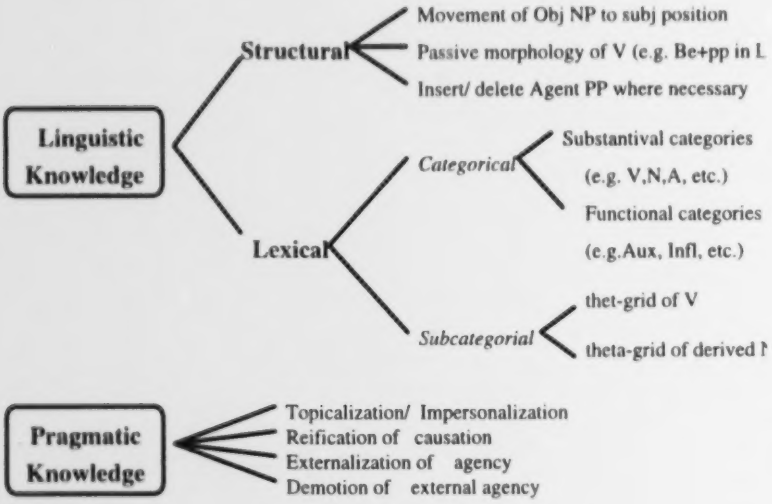
To know an L2-structure intuitively is therefore to have *total* knowledge of the linguistic and pragmatic properties that are incorporated in that structure as an entity existing exclusively for its *epistemological* value. The temporary and necessary abstraction of this entity from the *practical* capacity of 'intellect' may well explain why the context, which requires the use of that L2-structure, sparks off aversive difficulty/pain, and subsequently an avoidance trial. This is because the abstraction process as such is simply a mental dissociation of the learner's intuitive knowledge of the L2-structure from its 'absolute certainty', which is attainable only in 'intellect'. Furthermore, 'absolute certainty', whose function is to verify intuitive knowledge via *manipulating* the **object** of this knowledge for intentional purposes of action, may also explain why the learners (if they did in fact perform avoidance in Schachter's data at least) tend to produce the L2-structure (i.e. the object of 'intuition') only when they are **sure** of its nonerroneous reorganization. If this is correct, then one would conclude that avoidance of an L2-structure occurs when intuitive knowledge of that structure is abstracted from anything contributed by 'intellect', simply because this abstraction would be the source of aversive difficulty/pain in the reorganization process. Conversely, aversive difficulty/pain, and therefore avoidance, would no longer be experienced when both 'intuition' and 'intellect' interact for the reorganization process; and, in such a case, the production trial cannot be taken as a reflection of the learner's 'linguistically masochistic' behaviour.

As mentioned above, the relation between 'intuition' and the avoided L2-structure is to be seen as a sort of *total* knowledge existing exclusively for its epistemological value; *total* in the sense that the production trial, via the functioning of 'absolute certainty', unveils the

linguistic and pragmatic representations of the structure with no erroneous manifestations from an L2-perspective. If, however, significantly frequent production trials reveal incorrect manifestations, then 'intuition' of the structure is simply a sort of partial knowledge, and thus the subsequent underproduction trials cannot be ascribed to avoidance.

Let us now reconsider Kleinmann's account of the passive construction, for instance, in the light of this exposition. On the basis of a contrastive analysis (CA) of the passive in L1-Arabic and L2-English, Kleinmann predicted that the Arabic learners of English would experience difficulty with this structure. The assumption was that, through the learners' exposure to indirect preference assessment task, such difficulty would manifest itself in avoidance which 'could not be attributed to a lack of knowledge' (Kleinmann 1977:97). For him, the presence of knowledge of the passive was initially established by means of comprehension testing coupled with measurements of affective variables such as *confidence* (cf. 'absolute certainty' above), *anxiety*, and *motivation*. All these linguistic and psychological procedures were thus administered to show that avoidance trials were predictable, and that production trials were conditioned by the affective variables just mentioned. This in principle is not a conceptual deviation from the general definition of the 'avoidance-production' dichotomy: if the learners did prove total comprehension of the 'avoided' English passive, then total knowledge of this structure (in the sense discussed here) would occupy their 'intuitive' mind in a form that may be described by the linguist explicitly as in Figure 1.

Figure 1: An explicit description of intuitive knowledge of the passive construction



It is therefore intuitive knowledge of *all* the principles along with the correct values of the parameters that have been fixed which interact for passive-formation and its pragmatic import. However, Kleinmann's limited method of comprehension testing indicates nothing but the learners' elicited L2-responses to a limited set of stimuli (4 pictures for the passive), which may at the same time elicit L1-responses *internally* as filtering devices, given the establishment of most simplified crosslinguistic similarities between L1 and L2 in the comprehension process. Although the elicitation task was 'successful' in terms of the method conducted, comprehension of the passive within these limitations could in no way illuminate the learners' intuitive knowledge (cf. Figure 1), if it really existed exclusively for its epistemological value. After all, the relatively high frequency of erroneous production trials (Kleinmann reported that 76% of the trials were erroneous) is proof enough that *total* knowledge in the sense discussed above did not

exist. Consequently, *partial* knowledge of the passive cannot be taken as a prerequisite for detecting avoidance.

A further problem with Kleinmann's study stems from the a *priopri* correlation between avoidance and the CA-prediction of difficulty. How could one make possible such a correlation with no empirical (i.e. a *posteriori*) notion of its 'repercussions'? (Schachter herself did not address this issue at first; she 'discovered' it only later (cf. Kamimoto et al. 1992:257).) Although it is possible to predict difficulty on the basis of parametric variation between L1 and L2, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to initially establish whether such difficulty would lead to avoidance or to error-making. Thus to account for the *already predicted* difficulty in terms of avoidance could only imply that every passive in Arabic, for example, functions as a passive in English and vice versa. For such implication it is not hard to extrapolate a warping streak of fortuitous confirmation: *the learners avoided the structure whenever they perceived L1-L2 variation via an internal CA!* If this were true, then the L1-passive would provide the input to what Chomsky (1986) terms 'canonical structural realization', a process whereby the theta-arguments of V (or derived N) in the L1 are to be canonically realized as syntactic categories (NP, PP, etc.) in the L2. Thus, a Patient-argument, for instance, is to be realized as an NP in the L2 because it is already realized as an NP in the L1. As a result, both L1 and L2 would involve the same principles and parameters shown in Figure 1, but L1-L2 variation would arise from the way such principles and parameters interact for passive-formation in either language, hence the difficulty and the avoidance trials. This analysis, however, may well be relevant but only to the Arabic passives that do in fact function as passives in English, given the learners' intuitive knowledge of the latter. But what of those that do not? The answer to this question would be far from satisfactory without considering the potential frequency differences in this structure between L1 and L2.

It is assumed that Kleinmann based his contrastive analysis on the written variety of the L1 (Classical Arabic/MSA) since the canonical passive that occurs in this variety (e.g. qutila 'was killed (he)') is normally replaced by the morphologically marked reflexive in Colloquial Arabic (e.g. inqatal vs. qutila). In order to show the

frequency differences in the canonical passive between Classical Arabic and English, a method similar to that of Kamimoto et al. (1992) was applied, except that I took different measures which are of importance here. As a standard example of Classical Arabic, the Koran was chosen, and all the canonical passives found in the first nineteen chapters were counted. Then, the same nineteen chapters of each of three respected English versions were examined along five paradigms as illustrated in Table 1. The choice of these English versions was also determined by the L1s of their writers: Dawood (1956/90) is an Arabic scholar, Arberry (1964/90) is an English scholar, and Ali (1934/46) is an Indian scholar.

Table 1: Frequency of passives in the first nineteen chapters of the Koran and three English versions

Version	**(A) Total of passives in Arabic**	**(B) Total of passives in English**	**(C) Passives in Arabic and English**	**(D) Passives in Arabic only**	**(E) Passives in English**
N.J. Dawood (1956/90)	531	911	414	117	497
A.J. Arberry (1964/90)	531	929	463	68	466
A.Y. Ali (1934/46)	531	920	437	94 app.18%	483 app.52%

Note that, apart from the morphological variation across L1 and L2 (synthetic vs. analytic, respectively), the canonical passives of paradigms A and B are only those which satisfy the principles and parameters in Figure 1. The striking difference between paradigms A and B shows that approximately 18% of the Arabic passives do not function as passives in English (paradigm D), and that approximately 52% of the English passives do not function as passives in Arabic (paradigm E). This difference alone would account for the Arabic learners' underproduction trials at the English passive in Kleinmann's data. Moreover, the extremely pervasive nonagentive nature of the passives in Arabic (approximately 95%)[4] tends to minimize considerably the functional divergence across certain L1-actives and L2-agentive passives, since the nonagentive nature of the passives in English is less pervasive (approximately 85%). Surprisingly, all the English passives reported by Kleinmann are agentive and would be far more natural when rendered as actives in Arabic due to the 'instrumental' insertion of Agent-PP in the L2-structure (e.g. *The man was killed* ***by the woman***), and thus the L1-structure, where the Patient-NP is topicalized and followed by an active, would coincide functionally. For example:

al-rajulu qatalat-hu al-mar?a.
(Gloss: the-man killed(SHE)-him the-woman)
The man, the woman killed him.

A recurrent L1-structure such as the above may well explain why one of Kleinmann's informants responded with an active after a pause intervening between it and a topicalized Patient-NP (cf. Kleinmann 1977:103). For example:

The woman [PAUSE] *The car hit the woman.*

This clearly indicates that the learners were just transferring the more natural activeness of the L1-counterparts, given the significantly low level of frequency overlap between L1-L2 passiveness (paradigm C) as a 'reinforcing' precondition for L1-influence. In other words, the L1-passives that are funtionally equivalent to the L2-passives are not

available for the learners to preceive L1-L2 variation as one possible precondition for the avoidance trials.

Finally, Table 1 demonstrates that Classical Arabic makes far less use of the canonical passive than English, even though the Koran, with its typical embodiment of **impersonal** style, incorporates a comparatively high percentage of canonical passives. That is, if the same method were to be conducted on any other book written in Classical Arabic or MSA and translated into English (or vice versa), the frequency differences would be far more striking than those in Table 1. Yet this does not imply that the Arabic passive forms a subset of the English passive; passivization in Arabic can be expressed via numerous structurally distinct devices, which are beyond the range of this paper.

CONCLUSION

We have seen that the results of Kleinmann's study are both misleading and contradictory due to a poor understanding of the phenomenon of avoidance, a problem that was also left unsolved in Schachter's original work. Hence, the implication of delay discussed above should be underlined as a starting point, otherwise our inquiry about avoidance in SLA research will go awry. This is because delay presupposes some sort of knowledge which is easy to pinpoint but difficult to explain. Thus an attempt was made to identify this knowledge in terms of Bergson's notion of 'intuition', a total knowledge of the avoided form, that is governed by a system of stagnant cognition and impracticalized at a given stage where the workings of 'intellect' are psychologically blocked. This is similar to the L1-speaker's full knowledge of taboo words which are avoided under obvious social constraint, but whose direct use is called upon when they are felt to be most 'expressive' in certain contexts. Comparisons and metaphors suggest nothing else than what is avoided knowingly or what cannot be expressed unknowingly.

NOTES

1. This paper is a somewhat elaborated version based on a previous research project conducted at Dublin City University in 1990-91. I would like to thank Carl James whose wholehearted acceptance of my criticism was the main inspiration for undertaking the project.

2. In his so-called 'standard book', James identifies avoidance strategies as examples of what he calls 'ignorance without interference' (James 1980:22). The book contains a series of further misinterpretations, but I will not discuss them here.

3. Intuition in this sense (i.e. the epistemological, but not the psychological) is one of the necessary conditions specified by some early phenomenologists. Bergson stressed the cogitative nature of intuition as opposed to a spontaneous flash of insight. Yet this mode of 'thinking' is **static** because it enters into what it knows in order to coincide with what is **inexpressible** about it. The capacity of intuition is thus detached from the demands of action (i.e. intellect) at a certain stage (cf. *Introduction to Metaphysics* in his *The Creative Mind*).

4. Out of the 531 Arabic passives (paradigm A) only 28 examples express an overt Agent-PP: 25 with the preposition (min) *'from'*, 2 with the preposition (bi) *'with/by'*, and 1 with the preposition (?inda) *'at'*. It is interesting to see that up to the 14th century *'from'* was used as the principal preposition to denote agency in Old English--with the use of other prepositions such as *'with'*, *'of'*, *'at'*, etc. as secondary. Only later, however, did the preposition 'by' develop diachronically out of the bound morpheme *be-* (cf. Fraser 1987).

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• AN GÚM •

SLA Before ABC: Factors Facilitating Second Language Acquisition in Irish-Medium Playgroups

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INTRODUCTION

Irish-medium playgroups or *naíonraí* were founded over 20 years ago with the twin aims of developing the child's potential through play and the acquisition of Irish as a Second Language (Ó Murchú 1985: 13). The research carried out to date has focused on aspects other than the process of Second Language learning. Given the author's ten years experience as a *naíonra* teacher, she decided to investigate the actual process of acquisition when writing a Master in Education thesis (Mhic Mhathúna 1993). The aim of the study was to identify some factors that were facilitating the acquisition of Irish as a second language in *naíonraí*, looking in particular at the role of input and interaction in the acquisition of Irish as a second language by young children. This paper attempts to summarise the scope and findings of the study. Input has been defined by Ellis (1986: 127) as

> the language addressed to the L2 learner by either a native speaker or by another L2 learner. **Interaction** consists of the discourse jointly constructed by the learner and his interlocutors; input therefore is the result of interaction.

In the context of the present paper, the language spoken by the teacher to the children and the type of discourse and conversation in which they partook were considered to be of primary importance.

The research by Seliger (1983), Snow (1977), Wagner-Gough (1975), Hatch (1983) and others was studied to identify the particular aspects of Input and Interaction that were considered to facilitate SLA as well as quantitive and qualitative studies of actual classroom practice. Lily Wong-Fillmore's (1985) research was particularly helpful here as were case studies of Second Language kindergartens by Weber and Tardiff (1991) and by Vesterbacka (1991). The Irish research by Owens (1992) and by Hickey (1993) also offered many valuable insights. The main aspects of Input and Interaction identified by these researchers were:

The amount and frequency of Input.

The modifications made by competent speakers when talking to learners, including Foreigner Talk and Teacher Talk.

Conversational scaffolding and dual construction of conversation that Scollon (1979) refers to as Vertical and Horizontal Constructions.

Two *naíonraí* were selected for the study, using predetermined criteria and four visits were paid to each of them within a six week period, from April to May 1992, for the three hour duration of a session. There were two adults in charge of each group of approximately 20 children, one teacher or *stiúrthóir* and one assistant. Two children were chosen in each *naíonra* as the primary focus of observation, though this did not preclude observation of other children. The sessions were audio-taped and 12 hours were transcribed in full. This data was then analysed in order to see which factors were facilitating SLA.

The conversational exchange was chosen as the unit of analysis because this was the most natural and most frequently occuring unit in the data. As the children were at the initial stages of acquiring a Second Language it was considered appropriate to study the data under the headings of Understanding, Code Mixing, Formulaic Speech and Creative Speech. A number of common features across the various headings were identified and are described below.

1. LARGE AMOUNT OF INPUT

The *naíonra* is a form of immersion education, that is all teaching and communication initiated by the teacher is carried out in Irish, the target language. The children attending the naíonra, therefore, received a large amount of input. This amounted to about 440 hours a year. Some of the children who spoke more creatively in Irish were attending the *naíonra* for a second year. At the time the research was carried out, the end of Term 2, they would have had approximately 740 hours exposure. This bears comparison with the amount of contact time with the language which is available to a child in primary school. A *naíonra* child has more than double the amount available to a pupil in an English-medium primary school and roughly half the amount available in an Irish-medium school. Nevertheless, this is considerably less than the exposure which a child has with his First Language, which Singleton (1989) estimates at 3,650 hours per year.

It was interesting to note that the children accepted that the teachers in the *naíonra* would speak in Irish. Indeed they expected them to do so. On one occasion a child mistakenly thought that the teacher used an English word and was visibly put out by this departure from practice (Mhic Mhathúna 1993: 151). Wong-Fillmore (1985:34) thinks that the separation of languages, with clear and obvious boundaries, is beneficial to the learner as it helps him to predict which language is appropriate for each occasion and to keep the two languages apart.

2. HIGH LEVEL OF REGULARITY

Wong-Fillmore (1985: 39) has also identified the significance of a high level of regularity, both in the presentation of lessons/activities and in the type of language used in the lesson itself, as being important to the Second Language Learner. The present study bears this out. This regularity allowed the children to predict

what they were to do

what the teacher would be saying in any routine situation

what they themselves were expected to say.

The teachers used a lot of repetition in their interactions with the children. Often they would ask the same question several times, but with minor changes to help the child understand. This negotiation of meaning is another important aid to acquisition.

The children recognised the regular pattern of questions that the teachers used. The teachers rarely changed the question pattern they used in the matching card game, for example. At least some of the children had worked out a strategy of anticipating the next question and then answering that anticipated question, regardless of which one was actually asked, e.g.

Teacher: Aon, dó, trí, ceathair, cúig. Cén dath é sin? [One, two, three, four, five. What colour is it?]

Child: **Cúig.** [Five.]

This type of response allows us to suppose that the pattern of prediction can be helpful in the early stages of SLA as long as the teacher keeps to the rules!

One *naíonra* in particular used the Lunch Ritual to teach a wide range of formulaic utterances. The formulas were learned by the children as unanalysed chunks at first. However the sheer familiarity of these formulas in easily understood contexts and the many opportunities for participation allowed some of the children to start to break down and analyse the construction of the utterance:

Child 1: **Bainne ólta.** [Milk drunk.]

Child 2: That's not **bainne**. It's **oráiste**.

These formulaic utterances were composed and used by the teachers in a deliberate and predetermined way to allow the children to partake in routine interactions through Irish. Referring to First Language Acquisition, Hickey (1993) states that child constructed formulas are difficult to identify and none were found in the data. However, there are many examples of two and sometimes three turns in a card-game for

example, being enacted by the children among themselves entirely through Irish, using taught formulaic utterances (Mhic Mhathúna: 212).

3. CHILDREN'S NEED/OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK

The children spoke in Irish when they wanted to promote their own position in some way, eg. to ask for help or to attract the teacher's attention. Some children were well able to provide these opportunities for themselves but shy or reticent children needed to have the opening made for them, by being asked to say a formulaic phrase in a game or during a routine activity. Wong-Fillmore (1985: 41) concurs with the need for this type of provision and of gentle social pressure in order to promote production of the Second Language, especially for quiet children.

The need to speak, for whatever reason, appeared to be far more significant than the frequency of particular items in the input. Several other formulaic phrases appear with the same frequency in the teacher's input but only those that satisfy a particular need occur in the children's production.

4. ROLE OF THE TEACHER

The teachers observed were very enthusiastic and diligent about their task of providing the children with as many opportunities as possible to both hear and speak Irish. They created a warm, secure environment where the children knew that their efforts would be both welcome and accepted. The fact that the teachers rarely corrected a child's efforts at speaking Irish directly probably helped to boost the children's confidence. Instead, they repeated the child's utterance through Irish if it was in English or expanded it if it was a one or two word utterance in Irish. Above all, they showed that they were interested in WHAT the child had to say, as well as HOW he said it.

The teachers used the many opportunities for incidental talk to the full. They spoke in a clear, simple way, with one proposition per utterance. The meaning was usually clear from the context as most topics of conversation related to the current situation. The teachers were the main source of the Second Language. There was one competent Irish-speaking child in each naíonra and while they spoke Irish to the teachers they spoke in English to their peers as communication was their aim. It follows

therefore that the language learning was to take place while interacting with the teacher on an individual or group basis. It seemed that the majority of the children got most accessible input when this interaction took place on a small group basis. However, there were the usual constraints on the type of interaction that can take place in a group setting, such as following an individual child's interest while still maintaining the attention of the whole group, as detailed by Cicognani and Zani (1992).

The value of Directed Input, that is the modifications that the teacher made to her speech to suit the level of a particular child, proved to be significant for children who had reached a certain threshold level of competence. The threshold level in this instance would seem to be complete familiarity with the formulaic utterances and an ability to identify individual words within them. In holding conversations with these children, the teacher was able to offer a personal conversation scaffold to the child, building frames where the child could fill in the spaces. As the conversation progressed, in the vertical fashion outlined by Scollon, the teacher was able to reduce the level of support as the child showed increased competence, thus allowing him to speak in an unprompted manner e.g.

Teacher:	Cá mbíonn sé (an phéist)? Ins an ..
	[Where is it (the worm) In the ...
Child:	Féar. [Grass]
Teacher:	Agus cá mbíonn an phéist? [And where is the worm?]
Child:	Ins an féar. [In the grass]

A large amount of input was also made available to the children through the whole group activities, such as games, dancing and the lunch-time ritual. These were teacher-directed activities, but they were based on the children's interests. Wong-Fillmore's (1985: 24) research shows that where the teacher is the main source of SL, mainly teacher-directed education is more beneficial to language acquisition than the individual/child-centred model.

5. Role of the Parents

By the very fact of choosing to send their children to a *naíonra*, the parents showed that they were favourably disposed towards Irish and

towards their children learning Irish at a young age. Parents cited an interest in Irish as the main reason they sent their children to a *naíonra*, rather than to another type of pre-school (Mhic Mhathúna 1993: 234). Detailed answers to a questionnaire and their verbal behaviour in the *naíonra* itself showed that they knew which words, phrases, and songs the children knew and understood.

Many parents spoke some Irish to their children in the *naíonra*. For example, most said good-bye in Irish and received a reply in Irish. They also spoke in Irish to the teachers, according to their ability. Some also continued to speak in Irish to their children when they returned home or when they referred to the *naíonra*. Owens (1992) also refers to this phenomenon of the *naíonra* as an institution promoting the use of Irish within the family.

6. Variation in Children's Linguistic Ability

There was wide variation in the children's linguistic ability. All of the children showed either through action or through replying appropriately in English, that they understood what the teachers said to them. They also showed that they understood the special vocabulary pertaining to the naíonra and the activities carried out therein. Surprisingly, there was very little code-mixing, as the most frequently occurring phrases appeared to have been taught as formulas. All of the children could all use the formulaic phrases in their basic context.

Some children were able to use words and phrases outside the context in which they were first acquired. One child told the teacher that she saw **capalls** [horses] in the field beside her house and the same child used a formulaic phrase 'Cé leis é seo', [Who owns this?] to gain attention for herself. This need for self-promotion also prompted a boy to inform the teacher that another child was running around the room: **Donnchadh is ag rith.** [Donnchadh is running.] **Ag rith** was a phrase from a story that particularly appealed to the children and that they obviously heard very often. One of the most creative exchanges was also initiated by the same book. One of the boys 'read' the story by describing the action in each picture and gave a very creditable rendering of the tale, using and re-using a small stock of phrases in a most creative fashion.

SUMMARY

In summary all of the children observed reached the stage of using formulaic phrases in the context in which they were taught. The data shows evidence that a small number, perhaps a fifth or so, of the children were able to expand the use of the formulas to other unrelated contexts or to break them down into their constituent parts. A smaller number again were able to manipulate the knowledge they had to communicate in a creative manner. Other children may have had similar competence but did not show it during the study.

This wide variation in language ability meant that the teachers had to tailor their input to suit each child's level of competence. It was important that each child received an appropriate level of input in order to progress. But it was also important that too much pressure was not exerted on the learners before they were ready to produce utterances in their Second Language. Through a mixture of whole group, small group and individual interaction, the teachers observed were able to suit their input to the individual child's level, at least for a significant part of the time.

It would seem from the present study that the crucial turning point or pivot in acquiring Irish in *naíonraí* was when the children observed moved away from using formulaic phrases in taught contexts to using the same formulas in novel and unrelated contexts and to using more creative speech. The child's need for self-promotion and communication along with the real interest and support of the teachers as shown in their acceptance of the children's efforts and the language scaffolding they gave them, facilitated the acquisition process. More widespread and more long-term research is needed to study the process of acquisition before any conclusions can be drawn as to what the main factors facilitating acquisition on a broader front than the case study here described are. The present study offers a starting point, a method of analysis and it is hoped some pointers as to the direction of continuing research.

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Academic Regulation of EFL in Ireland: Developments Since 1991

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First developed in Ireland in the sixties, the teaching of English as Foreign Language (EFL) has undergone greater expansion and change since 1991 than in the previous twenty-five years. Inevitably, this increase in provision led to significant pressure for change in all sectors of the Irish EFL industry, in its management structures, its promotional policies, and particularly in the nature of its regulatory procedures. Decisions taken during this fast-changing period will be critical in shaping the future directions of all aspects of the industry. Nowhere is this more true than in the area of EFL academic regulation which, up to recently, had developed very little in this country. The evolution of the events surrounding the academic monitoring in Ireland since 1991 is the subject of this paper. With the recent growth of interest in language in education policies, the case of EFL in Ireland represents an interesting study of the nature of industry and government partnership in an area of importance for economic growth, as well as for the academic development of language teaching internationally.

CHANGES IN THE LATE EIGHTIES

An important impetus was given to the global spread of English as an international language as a result of the massive surge in demand for language training which occurred in the lead-in period to the Single European Act Agreement in 1992 (Etats Généraux des Langues 1989). Ireland was one of the beneficiaries of this international growth and developed in importance as a destination for English language learning

from the late eighties onwards. The most spectacular growth occurred in English teaching to adults. The increase in numbers can be shown by the growth in the number of English language schools in the country (Advisory Council for English Language Schools 1995) - 22 year-round and 34 summer schools in 1989 rising to 62 year-round and 103 summer schools in 1995. The importance of EFL in public sector third-level institutions also began to emerge. With the increase in EU Erasmus and other programmes of inter-university co-operation, overseas - mainly European - students opted to pursue a portion of their studies in Irish third-level colleges. EFL teacher education and training programmes also came on stream in university institutions, from preparatory certificate to masters level, with many of them funded from the European Social Fund.

THE POSITION OF THE EFL INDUSTRY

Academic monitoring of EFL teaching in Ireland has always been carried out under the auspices of the Irish Department of Education through its Advisory Council on English Language Schools (ACELS). Established in the early seventies, the Advisory Council's membership consisted of representatives of the Department of Education, the Department of Foreign Affairs, Bord Fáilte Eireann and Dublin Tourism. An ACELS News Release (no date) announcing the establishment of the Advisory Council outlined its functions as follows: (a) to study, in all its aspects, the situation in regard to English Language Schools catering for foreign students, (b) to make practical arrangements for the physical and academic inspection of English Language Schools that apply to the Minister for recognition, and (c) to advise the Minister on all matters relating to such schools. In theory, therefore, the terms of reference of ACELS enabled it to consider a wide range of areas of importance to the teaching of English as a Foreign Language, such as teacher training, course certification, syllabus development etc. In practice, however, its main operations were in the area of school registration and inspection. Schools wishing to be registered paid a fee and those which met the standards laid down were entitled to display the legend 'recognised by the Department of Education' on their promotional literature.

Concerned about aspects of the operation of the ACELS inspection and registration process (Recognised English Language Schools Association 1993:1), the EFL industry and teachers began to press for improvements in the manner in which it conducted its business and for greater consultation between the industry and the Advisory Council. This impetus for upgrading and consultation became much stronger as student numbers began to increase in the late eighties. The prime mover in the campaign was the school owners through their professional association, the Student Organisers' Association of Ireland (SOAI), which later developed into the Recognised English Language Schools Association (RELSA). RELSA was founded in 1988, and in the years which followed attracted a significant increase in its membership. This now stands at seventy-five schools and accounts for almost ninety per cent of the entire EFL industry in Ireland. An important feature of the organisation is that it draws its members not just from the private sector but also from the public sector. Since its inception, its functions too have grown significantly, and it is now engaged in a wide range of academic, social, cultural and administrative functions. Two of its most notable achievements have been the development of a preparatory EFL teacher training certificate and the establishment of a joint marketing group Marketing English in Ireland (MEI) in 1993. The teacher training initiative was taken to combat the widespread practice of weekend and two or three day courses offered, and in the absence of government initiative in this area. In view of its proactive stance on a range of EFL-related professional issues, not surprisingly, RELSA was to the forefront of the campaign for the upgrading of ACELS. In 1990, it presented a set of proposals and guidelines to ACELS. This was followed by further representation in early 1991 (RELSA 1993:2)

POSITION OF EFL TEACHERS

As well as the school owners, EFL teachers, through their professional association, the National Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language in Ireland (NATEFLI), also pressed for improvements in academic monitoring procedures. In common with RELSA, the association saw the need for higher standards in the practice of EFL and greater professionalism in its organisation. As part of its own programme of professional development in the late 1980s, the fledgling NATEFLI decided to co-host the international IATEFL

conference and welcomed almost one thousand conference participants to Dublin in 1990. This was a huge and generous undertaking by Irish EFL professionals, designed to put Ireland on the international EFL map at an important time in the global and Irish development of EFL.

UPGRADING OF ACELS

The movement for the upgrading of ACELS focused on three points - improved quality in operational procedures, the creation of a strong central government body and greater input from those running the industry. The issue of quality and the need to develop professional standards in EFL was central if Ireland was to be in line with best international practice and compete effectively. As stated earlier, the EFL industry in Ireland was still relatively young. According to Doyle (1990: 11), it had come from simple beginnings and was, by and large, still a simple activity. In the late eighties, concentration in the industry was still on general English taught to younger age-groups in short intensive courses, mainly in the summer. Firms were small, many of them of a part-time nature. The specialist high value end of the market - Language for Special Purposes (LSP) - was not so well developed. Despite increasing international demand for English, British- and American-based English schools had the edge. The important report *English: A World Commodity* (McCallen 1989) did not even mention Ireland as a destination for learning English.

Upgrading meant getting to grips with issues of professional concern in the EFL industry - teacher training, certification, materials production, syllabus - not to mention dealing with the problem of schools not operating to an appropriate standard. The model aspired to by Irish EFL professionals was that of a single, independent agency with state support which would set, implement and monitor standards in a range of areas. Several possible models of well-established, well-funded agencies 'marketing' national languages existed e.g. Goethe Institut, British Council, Instituto di Cultura Italiana, the Alliance Française and others. In addition to the above, consultation was an important issue. Both the school owners and the teachers saw it as essential that they would have an input into the discussions and decisions which directly concerned their professional competence and their livelihoods.

THE POSITION OF GOVERNMENT

As the industry's campaign for upgrading began to gain momentum, impetus for change in the EFL monitoring authority also came from the state, in particular from those agencies with a role in tourism. Bord Fáilte, the first state agency to involve itself in EFL (Penston 1993: 11), had played an important part in the early development of the EFL industry, along with CTT (later to become An Bord Tráchtála) and, to a lesser extent, the Industrial Development Authority. All of these were now pressing for change. The reasoning behind this was self-evident. A small open economy located on the periphery of Europe, Ireland is dependent not just on increasing manufacturing exports but on selling international services. Tourism has been identified as a potential area of significant economic growth, and in a broadly based strategy to attract visitors to this country, international education services were targeted for development. As part of this, 'EFL linguistic stays' were identified as an important niche market product.

A formal enunciation by government of an official policy on the upgrading of EFL was set out for the first time in the Programme for Economic and Social Progress (Rialtas na hÉireann 1991: 47) in January 1991. It was included in the chapter dealing with employment and training, and in a section dealing with the development of 'Ireland as an International Education Centre'. It stated that government had accepted a recommendation for the 'Exploitation of opportunities in teaching English as a Foreign Language, with the assistance of Bord Fáilte and CTT and reconstitution of the Advisory Council for English Language Schools, under the aegis of the Department of Education, to control standards in teacher training, students performance and accreditation of schools and courses'. Thus, the statement in the PESP was an attempt by government to raise the profile of this new and expanding national export industry, which it saw as an opportunity for commercial exploitation. The role of an independent body was considered central to the development of EFL and the main thrust of government policy was the reconstitution of the Advisory Council. This would have, amongst other tasks, the responsibility of overseeing educational standards and would include representatives of the main parties involved - the state agencies, Bord Fáilte and CTT, working with the Department of Education.

The task of monitoring the implementation of the commitments of the PESP in the area of international education services including EFL, was initially entrusted to a committee working under the auspices of the Department of the Taoiseach, and which later came to be known as the 'Taoiseach's Committee'. A Working Group on Ireland as an International Education Centre was established in early 1991 and continued to meet until December 1993 (Working Group on Ireland as an International Education Centre 1994: 2). Though the Working Group invited and received submissions from the EFL industry, its membership was confined to government departments, state sponsored bodies and the social partners. The Working Group's deliberations were conducted confidentially in the main, but they clearly influenced government policy on the development both of EFL and international education services. In January 1992, government thinking had advanced to the point that the then Minister for Education (Mr Noel Davern TD) announced approval of proposals to develop and co-ordinate EFL and to promote Ireland as an international education centre. ACELS would be reconstituted as a company limited by guarantee under the aegis of the Department of Education. A second company, later to become the International Education Board Ireland (IEBI), would be established to promote Ireland as an international education centre.

THE GREEN PAPER

Published in June 1992, eighteen months after the PESP, the Green Paper - *Education for a Changing World,* further expanded on government thinking in EFL. Chapter eleven dealt with Ireland as an International Education Centre. In terms of general policy, the position outlined in the Green Paper was essentially the same as that included in the PESP. The rationale for the development of EFL was wholly commercial with emphasis on the financial opportunities for Ireland. The Advisory Council would be reconstituted. The main participants would be representatives of government departments, state agencies and EFL course providers. The Council would be required to be self-financing. The range of functions for the proposed reconstituted ACELS were extended and were as follows:

- To control standards in teacher training, both initial and in-career, for EFL teachers in Ireland, and to maintain a register of such qualified teachers.
- To control standards in accreditation of EFL schools and courses.
- To ensure the establishment of appropriate tests for EFL students and to control standards in the certification of their performance.
- To promote an Irish cultural dimension in the EFL courses, particularly in the textbooks used in its schools network.
- To undertake whatever other functions are considered necessary to promote the public interest, in so far as teaching English as a foreign language is concerned, which may reasonably be regarded as falling within its remit.

GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY INTERESTS

A striking feature of the development of EFL in the late eighties and early nineties is the extent to which the government and the EFL industry's general interests coincided. Both parties were pressing for improvement in the academic monitoring of EFL and both saw the importance of the development of an independent government-run agency. An opportunity clearly existed which could lead quickly to the creation of an effective academic structure to help develop EFL and to capitalise on its massive expansion in Ireland. The almost certain availability of funding from European sources to cover at least some of the expenses was an added bonus at this time. The immediate success of the project should have been assured. That the fulfilment of the hopes for early success was not easily realised is evident from the fact that, between 1991 and 1994, the achievements were slight. Despite the common objectives of government and industry for EFL at this stage, very real differences separated the parties in terms of their respective attitudes to how these common goals should be achieved. The account of how such a promising initiative took so long to progress, and the many stages of its development to a final and satisfactory outcome, is the subject of the next section of the paper.

Almost one year had to elapse between Mr Davern's announcement in January 1992 and the Department of Education's decision to initiate the process of convening the reconstituted ACELS. In December 1993, almost two years after the PESP, the Department of Education wrote to

RELSA and NATEFLI indicating that the reconstituted Council would be set up under its aegis and inviting them to nominate a representative. The terms of reference outlined for the new body were broadly similar to those contained in the Green Paper with one additional difference. This was that 'in addition to the educational functions, the new body will also have a broadened promotional role in relation to EFL in general'. The body would be set up as a limited company with a Memorandum and Articles of Association under the Department of Education. It would still carry advisory status. The incoming Board would have the opportunity of looking at the draft Memorandum and Articles of Association. These were made available in April 1993.

DIFFICULTIES WITH THE PROPOSAL

Although some of its members had misgivings about aspects of the Department's handling of the matter, the professional body representing EFL teachers, NATEFLI, by and large welcomed the proposal (National Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language 1993). RELSA, however, reacted with disappointment and dismay. They had several objections. Their greatest difficulty was with the representation they were offered on the new body. Concerned that they had not been involved in the consultative process leading to the reconvening of the Council, they believed their only hope of success was to influence it from within. Moreover, they believed they had been promised two positions and had publicly stated that these were a pre-condition for their co-operation. A matter of concern was the proposed extended remit of the Council particularly in view of the lack of professional EFL representation on the Council. Finance too was an issue as the Council would rely heavily, if not exclusively, on the fees of the membership and yet remain advisory to the Minister. By this stage too, RELSA was frustrated by the slow progress being achieved at a time of huge change in the industry.

There was a profound difference between the official government perspective and that of the schools on how to proceed. Whilst the schools were coping with the problems and challenges posed by the remarkable growth in the industry, and urgently needed what they perceived to be workable solutions to problems of academic standards, the Department's concerns were with due process and official

procedures. As can be seen in the correspondence between the two parties, and to which the author has been given access by RELSA, the Department's aim was essentially to implement government policy and to set up a body exactly as described in the various official documents mentioned earlier. It was not its function to propose a blueprint for the industry and it did not see itself as spearheading a plan for the academic development of ACELS. All decision-making functions would be fulfilled by the new body as soon as it was incorporated.

A RELSA ACADEMIC MONITORING BODY

By mid-1993, it was clear that the major differences of opinion between RELSA and the Department of Education, on the matter of the Council and specifically on the matter of representation, were reaching breaking point. The Department addressed the issue of increased membership by stating that provision existed in the Memorandum and Articles to appoint extra members once the Council had begun to meet. The industry believed that if they accepted the representation arrangements on offer, they would buy into a system in which they had no confidence and which, up to then, had disregarded their views. Too much was at stake for them to concede on this issue.

At a general meeting in August 1993, the RELSA membership, having considered all aspects, unanimously rejected the government proposal for a reconstituted ACELS and, consequent on this, agreed that it was not appropriate to nominate a member to the new body. Having broken this link with the Department, the inevitable consequence was to proceed to set up its own academic monitoring body. On 3rd September 1993, the Department of Education was informed of the membership's response to the proposals and its intentions for the future. RELSA was at pains to point out that the establishment of the new body should not be seen as a rift between it and the Department, but rather as a 'coming of age' for RELSA which would create a climate of more effective communication and liaison between the EFL industry and the government.

Though it represented a major challenge for its limited resources, the decision of RELSA to move in this direction was neither new nor surprising. A portion of the membership, weary of expecting change to

come from central government, had long believed that the best opportunities for growth lay with RELSA taking greater control of its own affairs. The achievements of professional English associations in countries newly arrived on the EFL scene - Australia and New Zealand for example - provided inspiring models. With the growing confidence of the Irish EFL industry, it was felt that, ultimately, an act of greater self-reliance by the members could provide impetus for growth and development. For many other members, however, the move by RELSA to set up its own body represented a huge break with practice and the loss of the coveted Department of Education recognition. Had it not been for the breakdown in the negotiations with the Department, it is likely that the proposal to set up a RELSA monitoring body would never have got sufficient support from the membership.

The matter of advising on the implementation of the RELSA recognition and inspection scheme was entrusted to a RELSA Academic Council. By the 19th November 1993, a proposal for the recognition and inspection scheme was in place and was communicated to the Department. This proposal was also presented to and approved by the membership. At no time was it RELSA's intention to have ACELS disbanded. The objective was to operate its own academic monitoring scheme, funded by the members and possibly from European sources, to maintain and develop links with the Department of Education, and ultimately to have its approval of the scheme. As time was of the essence, and to get the scheme up and running as soon as possible, the post of Academic Manager for the new scheme was advertised by RELSA in the Irish Times on 26th November 1993.

DEPARTMENTAL REACTION

Not anxious to proceed to reconstitute ACELS without the nomination of RELSA, for which it had been pressing for some time, the Department of Education was suddenly spurred into action. In its letter of 7th December 1993, the Department, whilst acknowledging the position of RELSA as outlined in the letter of the previous 3rd September, indicated that it was proceeding to organize the first meeting of the new ACELS on 17th December. Once again it invited RELSA to nominate a member. The Department's letter also made it clear that the new ACELS would carry no financial obligation for RELSA, and that

the Minister would look favourably on increased representation from the industry. This, however, was not enough to bring RELSA on board. Unwilling to nominate a member to ACELS, RELSA was not, however, in favour of breaking off links with the Department. It was on this basis that it sought to meet the Department of Education at that time, with a view to appraising it of the RELSA proposals in the context of the new ACELS. As events turned out, this meeting was to be the first in a series of meetings between the industry and the Department of Education. It was also felt by RELSA to be one of the first opportunities for genuine exchange and discussion of matters of mutual concern. More importantly, it inaugurated a period of intense and lengthy negotiation meetings between both parties. On the table for these meetings were the RELSA proposals, possible links between the Department of Education and the industry, the future of the EFL industry and the potential role of the new ACELS. Whilst almost all of the negotiations were conducted confidentially between the Department's and RELSA officials, discussions were far-reaching and felt by RELSA to be constructive and positive. Although it became clear that the Department would not take on the RELSA scheme *in toto*, meaningful input and representation from the industry into whatever scheme was developed seemed to be a distinct possibility.

By early February 1994, discussions between the Department of Education and RELSA had progressed considerably. RELSA wrote to the Department on 7th February summarising its view of the position reached at this point. The letter stated that, following the discussions which had taken place, RELSA's understanding was that there was general agreement concerning the implementation of a co-operative scheme, based on genuine partnership, and involving the industry and the Department of Education. They then went on to present a detailed plan for the development of EFL academic regulation in Ireland involving a significant input from the industry, which they believed had been agreed in principle. The essential characteristic of this was a multi-tiered structure, consisting of an Advisory Panel made up of leading academics, an Academic Committee to oversee the management of the scheme of inspection and an Executive to manage the inspection scheme. An Inspectorate would also be put in place. A significant role for RELSA at all levels of this multi-tiered structure was envisaged.

Such a scheme would, RELSA believed, be acceptable to the membership.

FURTHER BREAKDOWNS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS

But events were not that simple. In a reply on 18th February, the Department of Education indicated significant objections to the RELSA proposals as set out. Among several difficulties raised, the matter of RELSA representation - the stumbling block from the beginning of the negotiations and by now an issue of major symbolic importance - once again became the divisive issue. Whilst RELSA representation on the Council had risen to two members, other new members were also being proposed, leaving RELSA in as weak a position as ever. The Department's proposal was felt to be unacceptable and the reaction of RELSA was swift and decisive. At an Extraordinary General Meeting called for 3rd March, a motion was proposed (a) to reject the Department of Education proposals, (b) not to nominate anyone to the Board of the proposed ACELS and (c) to proceed immediately to implement the RELSA academic monitoring scheme, to be administered by a new council called the Irish National Council for English Language Teaching (INCELT). Despite all the anxieties and concerns about the implications of breaking with the Department of Education, the motion was passed with an overwhelming majority.

At this point, it seemed as if the long-threatened break between both parties was inevitable. The rift seemed all the more certain when, shortly after the 3rd March meeting, the Department of Education, on 10th March, sent a circular to all English Language Schools - 'Note from Department of Education for Information of English Language Schools. **B20.1B**'. The Department's official position, as set out in the circular, was to the point. ACELS would be reconstituted, it would be funded generously, RELSA's views could be taken on board, but - and this was the rub - 'there would be no question of collaboration of any state agencies in the marketing of schools which do not enjoy the official recognition of the Minister for Education which could only be given on foot of a recommendation from the reconstituted ACELS'.

A Basis for Agreement

But at the very stage that this document was being circulated to schools and schools were contemplating how best to react, other events were in train. The senior negotiator on behalf of RELSA was called to an informal meeting with Department of Education senior officials around this time. The meeting occurred on Thursday 31st March 1994 and further frank and open discussions took place. A breakthrough was achieved. On the 25th April, it was possible for an agreed statement to be issued jointly by the Department of Education and RELSA. The full text of this statement is contained in the Appendix and it sets out the proposed structure for the future academic regulation of EFL in Ireland. On the thorny matter of representation, RELSA was given three places on the Board. From RELSA's point of view, the most significant part of the statement, however, is contained in the fourth paragraph: 'It is understood that the proposed new ACELS will reflect the greater understanding of RELSA's role in the EFL sector and the productive partnership which has been brought about between government and the industry.' This was the long sought for acknowledgement of their role in the development of EFL in Ireland over the years, and of their potential contribution to its success in the future. Summing up the results achieved by the months and years of negotiation, the Chairperson wrote to the members on 25th April 1994 recommending them to accept the proposals saying: 'The situation as it now stands allows for recognition by the Department of Education, through a greatly improved ACELS plus a new council of our own through which we can have our independent input in the development of our product.' The proposal was recommended to the RELSA membership and approved by them.

Reconstitution of ACELS

Almost a year has elapsed since these difficult but ultimately positive events occurred and, at last, progress has been achieved. The new body began meeting soon after the joint statement was issued. One of the most important initial tasks was the appointment of an executive and a post as Academic Manager/Executive Director was advertised early in December 1994. The new company - Advisory Council on English Language Schools (ACELS) Ltd. - was incorporated on 28th February 1995 and the first official meeting of the new company took place on

13th March 1995. At time of writing, the appointment of the new Academic Manager/Executive Director has been made and premises have been found.

A Final Comment

The resolution of the problems relating to the upgrading of ACELS and the establishment of the new council have provided a great sense of relief to all EFL professionals in Ireland. The successful outcome should not, however, blind us to the difficulties and challenges which face the new Council. There is no room for complacency. In effect, the task of regulating the teaching of English as a Foreign Language in this country is only just beginning, and a great deal remains to be done to bring Ireland into line with other countries by setting and implementing national standards in areas such as teacher education, course accreditation and materials development. Whilst up to now, Ireland has been concentrating on laying the foundations for development, issues of quality control and professional standards in ELT have been the subject of increasing world-wide scrutiny and attention (Brumfit and Coleman 1995: 176-184). Amongst the many reasons for this increase in interest, is the growth in importance of market forces in ELT and ever-increasing competition not just among private sector organisations, but also between public and private sector institutions as they compete with each other for students. Another important factor is increased international (particularly EU) co-operation in professional matters, with clear implications for schools, teachers, and students of the establishment of joint educational frameworks and international accreditation systems. Against this background of ever-increasing competition and standards, ACELS will find that, in the area of EFL academic regulation, it has a lot of ground to make up, much to learn from developments in other countries and a great deal to achieve. As it now begins to tackle its tough agenda, hopefully, the dynamic and energetic spirit which drove the events of the last four years and brought them to such a satisfactory conclusion, can still be found to inspire further developments and a better future for EFL in Ireland.

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APPENDIX

AGREED STATEMENT ISSUED JOINTLY BY THE

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND RELSA

25th April 1994

The following is a record of a meeting which took place on Thursday, 31st March 1994 between representatives of the Department of Education and RELSA concerning the reconstitution of ACELS.

This meeting discussed industry concerns regarding the intended organisational competence and structures of the new ACELS.

The department stressed their desire to address these concerns in a way that would be consistent with Government considerations.

It is understood that the proposed new ACELS will reflect the greater understanding of RELSA'S role in the EFL sector and the productive partnership which has been brought about between government and the industry.

While the organisational arrangements for the new ACELS are a matter for final ratification by the board of the newly constituted ACELS. It is hoped that the efforts of the last few months will be reflected in the adoption of the following multi-tiered structure to include: -

1. The board of the newly constituted ACELS will have overall responsibility. It will make recommendations to the Department of Education on the schools to be accorded official recognition by the Department. Authority will be sought for the following composition of the new ACELS on the understanding the Minister reserves the right to appoint at some future date, if she considers it necessary, a further person to the remaining vacancy on the board.

- Chairperson - to be nominated by the Minister
- 1 representative Department of Education
- 1 representative Department of Justice
- 1 representative Department of Foreign Affairs
- 1 representative Bord Fáilte
- 1 representative Dublin Tourism
- 1 representative NATEFLI
- 3 representatives RELSA
- 1 independent academic nominated by Minister for Education

2. An Advisory Panel to consist of members with a national and international profile in the world of EFL who may be called on to advise the other tiers of the structure and Board of ACELS.

   - Standards in teacher training, both initial and inservice, for EFL (English as a foreign language) teachers in Ireland
   - Standards on accreditation of EFL schools and courses
   - Appropriate tests for EFL students and the standards in the certification of their performance.
   - Other areas deemed appropriate by the board of ACELS
   - RELSA may submit names for consideration for this panel. The role of this panel would be consultative

3. **Academic Manager**

   He/She will be a person with extensive experience in EFL and will have a brief to develop the new system of inspection and recognition and other academic matters.

   The Academic Manager will be appointed by the ACELS Board in accordance with the selection arrangements to be determined by the Board. The position will be advertised nationally and internationally.

   It is envisaged that a RELSA nominee will participate in the selection procedure subject to approval of the ACELS Board.

4. **An Academic Committee** chaired by a RELSA nominee and consisting of the Academic Manager, a representative from NATEFLI and two representatives from RELSA. This committee will liaise with the Academic Manager and will have an advisory role in the academic matters. The Committee will make recommendations to the Board of ACELS on -

   - Overall academic criteria for the continuing recognition of schools;
   - The standards of teacher training both initial and inservice and how they are to be achieved and maintained
   - The content of TEFL courses
   - Appropriate tests for EFL students
   - Matters where general academic advice would be required relating to the work of the Academic Manager and to the responsibility of the Board.
   - Other matters deemed appropriate by the Board of ACELS

5. **The Inspectorate** - Subject to approval of ACELS Board it is envisaged that a team of assessors will be appointed by a selected board consisting of

   - Chairperson of the ACELS Board
   - Chairperson of the Academic Committee
   - Academic Manager

   Appointments would be part-time and contractual.

6. **Cost of Recognition**

   This format does not envisage any increase in fees for TEFL schools recognition in the immediate future. The fees to be charged in future years would be a matter for determination by the Board of ACELS.

Second Languages in the Primary School: The Age Factor Dimension

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ABSTRACT

This article considers the issue of primary-level L2 programmes from the perspective of evidence of an age factor in L2 learning. It begins by examining the "catch-up conundrum" - the apparent paradox of older beginners catching up with older beginners in formal instructional settings and younger beginners catching up woth older beginners in naturalistic settings. This conundrum is addressed via a modified version of Krashen, Long and Scarcella's notion of an initial advantage for older L2 learners and a long-term superiority for younger learners. The article goes on to note that available L2 evidence does not support an absolutist version of the Critical Period Hypothesis and that some learners attain native-like L2 proficiency without the benefit of childhood exposure to the language concerned. Finally, some general remarks are offered, based on earlier discussion, in respect of questions that need to be asked when the matter of L2s in the primary school is being considered.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Primary-level L2 programmes have come up for discussion in various recent publications emanating from Irish authors (e.g., Breathnach 1993; Harris 1992; McCarthy 1994). Nor, quite clearly, is interest in this topic purely local (see, e.g., C.M.I.E.B./C.L.A./Ville de Besançon 1992; Johnstone 1991; Pincemin and O'Neil 1990; Titone 1986; Vilke and Vrhovac 1993). Probably the major point of debate in this connection has been the question of the age factor in L2 acquisition. There are, of

course, many other factors that need to be considered when one is making decisions about languages in the primary school (cf. Singleton 1989: Chapter 6; Singleton 1992, and see below), but, for entirely understandable reasons, the age question is the one that looms largest. It is, moreover, an issue on which divergent views continue to be expressed - all claiming to be based on the available evidence. It therefore seems worthwhile to attempt to make sense of such evidence.

THE CATCH-UP CONUNDRUM

A highly influential contribution to the debate was the evaluation by Burstall, Jamieson, Cohen and Hargreaves (1974) of a project that introduced French into selected primary schools in England and Wales for pupils from the age of eight. The evaluation covered the period 1964-74, monitoring 17,000 pupils in all. Burstall *et al.* interpreted their results as showing a progressive diminution of any advantage conferred by early exposure to French. They cited comparisons between the experimental sample (i.e., pupils included in the scheme) and control groups of pupils who had begun learning French at age 11, the latter being drawn from the same secondary schools and most frequently from the same classes as the former. When experimental and control groups were compared at age 13, the former scored significantly higher on aural and oral tests, but the control pupils' performance in reading and writing equalled or surpassed that of the experimental pupils. When experimental and control pupils were compared at age 16, the only test on which the former's scores were still significantly ahead was the listening test. Given the three-year start of the experimental pupils, this looks very much like evidence of the superiority of the older learner. More direct evidence still comes from another comparison in the study; when experimental pupils were compared at age 13 with control pupils who had been learning French for an equivalent amount of time but who were, on average, two years older than those in the experimental sample; the control pupils' performance on each of the French tests was found to be consistently superior to that of the experimental pupils.

Also published in 1974 was Oller and Nagato's oft-quoted study. The 233 pupils for this piece of research were drawn from seventh, ninth and eleventh grades of a private Japanese elementary and secondary school

system, and at each grade level included some pupils who had received early instruction in English and some pupils who had not. Subjects' proficiency in English was gauged by means of cloze tests, a different test being deployed for each grade.. The results showed a highly significant difference in favour of the early beginners at the seventh-grade level, but a progressive reduction in this difference in the later grades, to the point where at eleventh-grade level it was no longer significant.

Subsequent studies conducted in other countries (e.g., Stankowski Gratton 1980; Morris and Gerstman 1986) yielded similar findings. It would be inappropriate here to multiply references, but, it is a clear general conclusion of evaluations of primary-level L2 programmes that within a few years of early beginners joining the classes of the later beginners at secondary level the latter have all but caught up with the former in terms of L2 performance (see, e.g., Harley 1986; Singleton 1989).

The findings of studies involving subjects who have learned an L2 "naturalistically", however, yield a converse pattern. Subjects with several years' naturalistic experience of their L2 whose exposure to the L2 began early in childhood are found to tend to outperform those whose exposure began later. On the other hand, naturalistic studies of subjects with more limited experience of their L2 show older beginners outperforming younger ones. In short, it seems that in naturalistic contexts the tendency is for younger beginners to catch up with older beginners.

Typical of investigations involving subjects with long exposure to the L2 is Oyama's work with 60 Italian-born immigrants to the United States who had arrived in America at ages ranging from six to sixty years and whose length of residence there ranged from five to eighteen years. Oyama tested her subjects' English pronunciation and listening comprehension. In the former experiment (Oyama 1976) subjects read aloud a passage in English and also recounted in English a frightening episode from their life. Audio-tapes were compiled comprising extracts of subjects' productions interspersed at irregular intervals with extracts of speech produced by native speakers, all extracts then being rated by

native speaker judges. The results revealed the following: the youngest arrivals performed in the range set by the native-speakers; those who had arrived around or after age 12 did not; and substantial accents began to appear much earlier. In the listening comprehension experiment (Oyama 1978), English sentences recorded by a native speaker were played to subjects against a background of "white noise", their instructions being to repeat what they understood. A clear age at arrival effect again emerged, subjects who had begun to be exposed to English before age 11 showing scores similar to those of native speakers, later arrivals doing less well, and those who had arrived after age 16 showing markedly lower scores than the natives.

Also worth mentioning is a recent study by Hyltenstam (1992) focusing on the long-term L2 attainment of immigrants in Sweden who had arrived at various stages during their childhood and whose period of residence in the country exceeded three years. Swedish data, both oral and written, were elicited from these subjects and from a control group of Swedish native speakers. Analysis of these data revealed that the numbers of errors produced by subjects who had arrived in Sweden after age seven were consistently in a higher range than that of the native speakers, whereas the range of numbers of errors produced by earlier arrivals overlapped with those of both the other groups.

Among studies involving subjects with shorter-term exposure to an L2 in an L2 environment, a representative example is Ervin-Tripp's (1974) investigation of 31 English-speaking children ranging in age from four to nine years who had been naturalistically exposed to French in Switzerland for up to nine months. The data in this case came mostly from tests of comprehension of syntax and morphology, imitation tasks, English-French translations, diary records and free conversation. The pattern which emerged from the results was that of the older children outperforming the younger ones across the board.
Again, this is not the place for a comprehensive review of the pertinent studies. Such a review would simply confirm the above-outlined pattern (see, e.g., Harley 1986; Long 1990; Singleton 1989). Indeed, research conducted by Snow and Hoefnagel-Höhle (1978) seems to provide *direct* evidence of younger naturalistic learners catching up with older learners. This study looked at beginning learners of Dutch newly

resident in the Netherlands and ranging from young children to mature adults. When these beginners were tested in Dutch shortly after arriving in Holland, it was found that the adults and adolescents were well ahead of the children. Further testing over the following months, though, showed the older learners' advantage gradually diminishing, so that within a year or so the younger learners' scores were in most respects as high as the older learners' and in some respects higher.

This, then, is the paradoxical state of the evidence. In conditions of natural exposure older learners initially evince a faster rate of progress than those whose L2 experience begins in early childhood, but these latter eventually catch up with and outstrip the former. In formal situations, on the other hand, secondary-school learners without benefit of L2 instruction at primary school eventually catch up during the secondary cycle with learners who have had primary-level L2 instruction. A superficial reading of these findings might conclude that formal conditions interact with maturational factors differently from natural exposure conditions. Before rushing to such a conclusion, however, it would be well to consider other possibilities.

First, there is a methodological consideration. As Stern observes in his (1976) critique of the Burstall *et al.* study, the fact that in such studies experimental and control groups are integrated at secondary level is likely to make for a blurring effect. Any teacher knows that if pupils who already have some experience of a given school subject are mixed with beginners and subjected to instruction which merely takes them over ground they have already covered, the result is boredom and demotivation - hardly ideal conditions for learning. In any case, if learners are not being given new material to work on, how can their knowledge do other than stagnate? Furthermore, pupils who, because of previous tuition, are markedly more proficient in a given domain than their peers quickly learn to hide the fact, in order to silence sarcastic comment; obviously, such pressure to conceal knowledge from others will hardly favour its development or even its retention. Given all of this, more than a modicum of scepticism is warranted with regard to claims based on studies like Burstall *et al.'s*.

Second, there is the exposure-time issue. Clearly, any period of experience of an L2 in an L2 environment delivers more exposure to the L2 than an equivalent period of formal second-language instruction. Accordingly, if the amount-of-exposure variable is held constant, the notions of "initial advantage" and "eventual effects" become associable in formal contexts with considerably longer real-time periods than in naturalistic situations. Specifically, it has been calculated (Singleton 1989: 236) that more than 18 years would need to be spent in formal L2 classes in order to obtain the same amount of L2 input as seems (according to the Snow and Hoefnagel-Höhle studies) to be required for older learners' initial advantage to begin to be eroded. One would not wish to propose a straightforward equation between a given amount of exposure over 12 months and the same amount of exposure over 18 years, but, when comparisons are made between different categories of language learners, the varying relationship between real time and exposure time does need constantly to be borne in mind. Short-term studies of instructed L2 learning (e.g., Ekstrand 1978) have revealed the same headstart for older beginners as short-term studies of naturalistic L2 learning. Singleton (1989, 1992) has suggested, in the light of the above-noted differences in density of L2 experience, that this initial advantage of older learners, which in naturalistic settings appears to last about a year, may, in the context of vastly sparser exposure to the L2 in classroom settings, last for many years. This alone would readily account for the fact that, within the normal secondary-school cycle, pupils without primary-level L2 instruction appear to catch up with pupils who have received such instruction.

THE "CONSENSUS VIEW" AND THE CRITICAL PERIOD HYPOTHESIS

Krashen, Long and Scarcella (1979) read the evidence on age and L2 learning as follows: while older beginners tend to outperform their juniors - at least in some respects - in the initial stages of learning, in terms of long-term outcomes, generally speaking, the earlier exposure to the target language begins the better. This view of the matter can probably now be characterized as the "consensus view" (see, e.g., Cook 1991; Ellis 1994; Harley 1986; Long 1990). It should be noted that Krashen *et al.* restrict their version of this "younger = better in the long run" position to naturalistic L2 acquisition. Singleton, on the other hand, argues (1989, 1992, forthcoming) that, in the light of the

arguments presented at the end of the last section, the Krashen *et al.* position can be broadened to include the case of formal L2 learning - always on the understanding that long-term benefits of an early start will depend on appropriate articulation between earlier and later learning, on continuing contact with the L2, and on a broadly positive set of classroom experiences of the L2.

This looks like support for the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH). However, such support needs qualification. First, it is perfectly obvious that the available evidence does not license the simplistic "younger = better in all circumstances over any timescale" version of the CPH that one finds in folk wisdom and that seems to underlie some of the "classic" treatments of age and L2 learning (e.g., Tomb 1925; Stengel 1939; Penfield and Roberts 1959; Lenneberg 1967). Second, even the "younger = better in the long run" version of the CPH in respect of L2 learning must be seen as a general tendency and not as an immutable law. Both research and informal observation suggest that an early start in an L2 is neither a universally sufficient not a strictly necessary condition for the attainment of native-like proficiency. Thus, for example, the literature on early bilingualism shows that the age at which one first encounters an L2 is only one of the determinants of the level of L2 proficiency one reaches (see, e.g., Romaine, 1989: 232-244), and it is noteworthy that even Penfield was prepared to recognize that under some circumstances an individual adult beginner *may* become a "master" of his/her target L2 (Penfield and Roberts, 1959:24).

The capacity of at least some older learners to attain native-like levels of L2 competence, at least in some conditions, is graphically demonstrated in recent studies by Bongaerts, Planken and Schils (forthcoming) and by Ioup (forthcoming). Bongaerts *et al.* address the question of L2 accent acquisition at the end of the critical period as commonly defined (around age twelve). Their findings show that at least for Dutch learners of English such a late start does not preclude the possibility of acquiring a native L2 accent. In discussing their results, Bongaerts *et al.* emphasize the fact that their successful accent-acquirers were university students majoring in English who had received special training in phonetics/phonology besides large amounts of unstructured oral input.

With regard to Ioup's study, this was conducted with two subjects who had learned Arabic as adults in Egypt. The question raised by Ioup is whether input enhancement is essential in order for adults to attain native-like levels of proficiency in their L2. She compares the performance of her two subjects - one entirely untutored in Arabic, the other the recipient of extensive formal instruction - on a range of tasks: - speech production, accent identification, translation, grammaticality judgment and interpretation of anaphora. It transpires that the differences between the two learners are marginal, both attaining levels of performance close to native norms. This prompts Ioup to consider the hypothesis that for those older L2 learners who are able to achieve native-like proficiency formal instruction may not be a prerequisite. However, she treats this hypothesis with caution, observing that her untutored subject in fact engaged in a certain amount of self-tuition and also welcomed and exploited corrective feedback.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In general, the available evidence suggests that early exposure to an L2 increases one's chances of ultimately attaining high levels of proficiency in the language in question, but that in formal learning situations any long-term advantage conferred by early exposure will be slow to manifest itself and may not manifest itself at all unless articulation between primary and secondary programmes and the learning environment *in toto* are properly managed. The evidence also suggests that at least some L2 learners are able to attain native-like levels of L2 competence without the benefit of an early start, although it seems that if this is to happen L2 input may need to be especially plentiful and may also need particular types of enhancement.

These conclusions do not solve the problem of whether or not L2 instruction at primary level is A Good Thing, but they do imply some questions that curriculum planners should ponder on when considering the matter - questions like the following. What level of competence in terms of fluency, formal accuracy and semantico-pragmatic authenticity is actually going to be required of/useful to the learners in the long term? What are the chances of ensuring that the input that learners will experience are at every stage of learning appropriately focused, appropriately abundant and appropriately enhanced? What degree of

co-ordination is possible between primary-level and secondary-level language programmes? Interestingly, these are questions that in fact need to be raised irrespective of whether primary-level L2 programmes are at issue. Even the relevance of the last-mentioned transcends the context of early L2 teaching, since language awareness deriving from early mother tongue education also impacts on later L2 learning. In other words, primary-level L2 instruction does not stand outside "normal" L2 teaching and learning concerns, whether as a panacea or a Pandora's Box. On the contrary, whatever decisions are made in relation to early L2 programmes need to be made with the entire language teaching/learning landscape in view and on the basis of broadly the same preoccupations as should be present to the mind when other aspects of language in the curriculum are at stake.

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Some Issues Regarding Irish

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Any discussion of minority language revival or language maintenance involves a great complexity of issues, some factual, some ideological, some socio-political, many of them controversial and contestable.

In the case of Irish, this is also the situation. Years of enthusiastic effort, rational discussion, heated controversy, dedicated scholarship, great enjoyment and great disappointment, have left us as a people still alive to the ideal of language maintenance and revival and still sensitive to the real cost in human and financial terms of sustaining this effort. We exist in an ongoing ambiguity. On the one hand surveys continue to show (cf. Ó Riagáin 1993) that the public at large has a positive attitude to Irish, believing it to be a major symbol of our national identity, and require above all a positive State policy on a national level; about 70% of the population believe that Irish should be taught as a subject in all schools and 20%-30% would send their children to all-Irish schools. 70% believe all-Irish schools should be provided wherever the community realistically requests them; about 70% favour the retention of Irish as a compulsory subject to Leaving Certificate; a majority want Irish to be an essential subject of the preparation of teachers as part of a general demand that Irish be taught properly in schools. A majority also favours the more extensive use of Irish in the Dáil and Civil Service. There are also positive attitudes to Government assistance to the Gaeltacht, to Irish on radio and television and to voluntary organisations working for Irish.

Coupled with this very positive attitudinal perspective, we have, on the other hand, the reality of a minority language trying to maintain visibility in a society dominated by a major international language where newspapers, Irish, English or American, rarely carry items on Irish, where popular or scholarly publications are largely in English, where all major events on television or radio are covered in English. Popular culture for most young people is mediated through English. The power and strength of Anglo-American culture threatens to submerge the vitality of people's loyalty to a strong native cultural tradition. As part of this submersion (cf. Bord na Gaeilge, 1986a) we have a very low percentage of regular users of Irish outside the Gaeltacht: we have a declining Gaeltacht population; fewer students taking higher level courses at Leaving Certificate; an acknowledged decline in standards of Irish in the educational system; fewer students studying Irish in the universities[1] and a general policy of uncertainty and confusion. Despite seemingly unambiguous declarations of support by leading politicians, Irish is for many not a priority socio-political issue.

As citizens we live our daily lives in some awareness of this ambiguity. We try to value the role of Irishness in enriching life in a modernity which is generally English dominated. This same modernity has wrought major social disruption and dislocation, has seriously questioned traditional values and understandings and has often left a vacuum of a fractured, alienated and rootless consciousness.

It is in the context of a vacuum such as this that concepts like cultural and linguistic heritage and cultural continuity and diversity derive their force. In a European Union where administrators aiming at economic and possibly political integration promote a degree of uniformity and homogeneity, our instinct for personal independence and identity awakens again the search for our remembered past and our distinctive cultural heritage as a source of both personal and national location and identity. Mindful of the words of Whorf 'that little languages and peoples are a treasure trove of wisdom and refinement', we undertake with renewed vigour the stewardship of our past and of our language as a repository symbolic of cultural and ethnic distinctiveness. The

stewardship must however be not of an empty symbol but of something which confers pride, vitality and self-esteem both on individuals and on the nation.

How has our stewardship been? Regarding the codification and elaboration of the language much has been achieved. A vast array of Old and Middle Irish texts has been and continues to be published from the manuscripts, many with notes, glossaries and scholarly annotations. The famous grammar of Old Irish of Rudolf Thurneysen laid the foundation for the major dictionary of Old Irish of the Royal Irish Academy. Publications of the Irish Texts Society and other bodies have meant that most major texts have been made accessible to scholars and students. Since the beginning of the revival of modern literature in Irish with authors such as Peadar Ó Laoghaire and Pearse, a great number of original works of creative literature continue to issue from a small dedicated band of writers and publishers. While major figures like Ó Cadhain, Ó Ríordáin, Ó Díreáin and Mac An tSaoi overshadow the area, nevertheless contemporary authors like Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill, Rosenstock, Mac Annaidh, attract considerable attention. While some question the quality of some modern work, it nevertheless stands as a major addition to the traditional corpus. The major question concerning it relates to the actual number of readers which indeed is small.

Regarding the language itself, it has been well served by lexicographers ranging in the 20th century from Dineen through de Bhaldraithe to Ó Dónaill. In a recent issue of *Teangeolas* No. 32, 1993, Ó Ruairc, laments the delay in accepting the modernisation of Irish with initial opposition to the use of Roman type and also to the Official Standard (1958). He also points to a crying need for the production of a new authoritative version of the Official Standard which could be done quickly and simply by normalising further the rules of grammar.

Ó Baoill in the same issue gives his scholarly attention to the standardisation of spoken Irish in which area the main thrust is towards a lárchanúint which makes a rational choice between some variants and defines the status of others. The need for openness to revision and regular updating is also emphasised.

The important area of terminological development is now under the institutional control of the Department of Education's *Buanchoiste Téarmaíochta*. This work is vital for education courses and provides standardised terminology for subjects in schools, e.g. business and scientific terms. In all, An Gúm has so far published 15 terminological dictionaries and the work continues through the labours of a standing committee and several sub-committees.

De Bhaldraithe, the eminent scholar and lexicographer, in a short article in the same issue, comments on some recent development in the internal structures of Irish based on examples from people in Cois Fharraige and Conamara. He concludes that while some developments, e.g. English words or phrases being half Irishised or translated, indicate decline, overall they accord with traditional methods of development and are evidence of vitality and ability to deal with modern affairs. He argues that the language continues to be enriched by speakers, writers, broadcasters, journalists, scientists, craftsmen who form a strong intelligent community linked together by radio and also shortly by television. On this front, therefore, things are better than they seem.

Having touched on the linguistic aspects of planning, I will now deal with the social ones which are deemed to be even more important and are an area rife with conflict and contention. Here the real planners are the administrators, the politicians, the power elite whether political, administrative, media or ecclesiastical. The early ideological idealism of a Gaelic-speaking Ireland, brought about by compulsory immersion in the infant school, floundered on the bitterness of the Civil War, the lack of a teaching force competent in Irish, the realism of English-speaking parents who had to witness the drudgery of their children and the persistent threat of early emigration. The socio-economic conditions meant that resources were scarce while enthusiasm and conviction abounded. Teachers began to question the sense of what was being done to children in the name of language maintenance and support for their criticisms came from psychologists. The educational administrators were slow to respond, in part because their political masters were dedicated, at least in their public expressions, to the protection,

extension and revival of Irish as the national language, the first official language.

Calls by teachers and others for new approaches to syllabi and methodology went unheeded and it was only in 1960 that the formal requirement to teach all subjects in the infant classes of the National School through Irish was removed. The 1964 Commission on the Restoration of Irish proposed that the work of the schools be directed towards giving children from English-speaking homes a functional command of the language to be used in later life. The Report focused on the need for a scientific linguistic analysis of the structures of the Irish language and also on the need to devise a progressive and carefully graded course of instruction. While it admitted that much of the good language work done in the schools was wasted because it was not backed up outside the schools, it pointed to the over-emphasis on the written as against the spoken language as the greatest weakness within the schools themselves.

The scientific analysis gave rise to Buntús Gaeilge which formed the basis for the Nua-Chúrsaí Comhrá which were implemented in the curriculum of 1971. The methodology adopted was the audio-visual one which was based on the behaviourist stimulus response, pattern-drilling acquisition theory which was the linguistic orthodoxy of the time. It also focused on the structure of the language rather than on the needs and interests of the children. While some success was achieved, research studies, notably those of Harris, show that from 6th and 2nd grade, the level of oral and aural competence of the pupils in relation to the stated objectives of the course is quite low. The authors of the course were obviously over-optimistic about its potential for producing oral competence.

Committees are presently devising a new syllabus for Primary School Irish. Its over-all thrust will be within the now fashionable communicative paradigm. It will incorporate a language awareness dimension coupled with a significant element of cultural awareness. Its primary emphasis will be oral and aural; it will be learner-centred, focusing on the needs and interests of the children and its design will fit

in with the notional-functional approach. It is essential that an adequate inservice programme is provided to initiate teachers into the theoretical background and methodological implications of this approach. It is also imperative that an exciting range of text books and materials is prepared to accompany this course and that the latest resources of modern technology should be available for use with it.

Already a new syllabus for the Junior Certificate based on the notional-functional approach is in place in the second level schools. It is essential that its implementation be monitored and reviewed and that when the new primary syllabus is available that care be taken that continuity is maintained. Already a new draft syllabus is available for Leaving Certificate at three levels within the same communicative paradigm. Again, it is vital that attention be given to continuity, inservice provision, materials production and appropriate modes of assessment. There are many problems with Irish at this level, among them the fact that fewer higher ability pupils are taking Irish at the higher level, that excessive emphasis has been placed on the written language with a concomitant neglect of oral and aural language, that a range of literary texts is set which to many students are old-fashioned, out-dated and unrelated to their life experience (cf. Ó Fathaigh, 1991). Research has shown that at this level Irish is peripheral to the experience of a great number of students. It is vital, therefore, that concern and attention is focused on motivational and interest factors.

While the schools and departments of Irish in third level institutions continue to attract students, there has been, in general, a significant drop in numbers due in part to a preoccupation among students and parents with the pragmatic concern of the job potential of particular qualifications. However, a slight change seems to have occurred in the last two years. Courses at third level will have to adapt to the more communicative orientation of the Leaving Certificate programme. Otherwise their valid preoccupation with the written language may distort the intention of the new Leaving Certificate syllabus and its orientation towards a preparation for real communicative use of the language. It is agreed that the experience of the Leaving Certificate programme by the student is crucial to future involvement as it is for

many the last ongoing structured interaction they will have with the language.

State policy continues to guarantee that every child can have access to their indigenous language through the State education system. As part of their induction into the language they are also introduced to the heritage of literature, folklore, music, songs and traditional wisdom. Irish as a core subject in the curriculum offers access to our cultural roots and understanding. Irish also has a significant constitutional and legal status. Surveys taken in recent decades indicate that a stable majority of the public are in favour of maintaining the teaching of Irish to most Irish school children. While there is also a strong attachment to the symbolic role of Irish in terms of ethnic identification as a cultural value in itself, there is a general pessimism about the future of Irish and a very weak commitment by many to actually using it.

This dichotomy between supportive attitudes, readiness to commit scarce resources to Irish, its value as a symbol and a low level of use bring us back to the tension duality and ambiguity which characterises the Irish revival movement as it does many others. Fishman (1991) refers to a neighbouring aggressive world power utilising a major world language to promote its perspective on the world. Edwards (1984) refers to the notion of 'a significant other culture' and language, the attractions of which as a world language and as a language of employment opportunity and social progress reduce the attraction of Irish as an instrument of real communication while not interfering with its value as a symbol of cultural distinctiveness. Edwards also points to the absence of a concentrated urban speech community where Irish could be at home with the forces of modernity. Both Edwards and Fishman stress the vital significance of intergeneration transmission of minority languages. It is here that the renewed interest in all-Irish schools and their significant proliferation coupled with the vitality of the all-Irish pre-school movement give grounds for optimism. Much needs to be done to create networks of parents of these children in which many facets of normal social, commercial and cultural interaction can occur through Irish.

The large number of voluntary bodies which are active in a systematic way in the promotion of Irish in the community and outside the education system also gives ground for hope. Community schemes such as Tiobraid Árann ag Labhairt, and various Éigsí and literary festivals also give strength to those who try to provide real opportunities for use of Irish. The success of Clann Lir, Coláiste na bhFiann and other colleges in fostering an enthusiastic cohort of young Irish speakers who are committed to the language calls out for replication.

The research work of Bord na Gaeilge, I.T.É., education and linguistics departments in universities and colleges, continues to provide data, analyses and information on which planning and promotion activities can be based. The promotional activities of the Bord also help to maintain the visibility of Irish and attract attention to it in the national consciousness. It may not be at the head of the socio-political agenda but any public figure who shows disrespect for it does so at his peril.

Special State support for the Gaeltacht continues to receive public approbation. Vital indigenous Gaeltacht organisations, such as Oidhreacht Chorca Dhuibhne, Eagraíocht na Scoileanna Gaeltachta, Muintearas, continue to produce substantial outcomes. It is to be hoped that a properly funded and properly managed Teilifís na Gaeilge will help to bind Irish speakers and supporters of Irish together and will in some way dilute the impact of the global communications network available to Anglo-American consumerism.

Despite uncertainty of success and fear of irrelevance, the work of restoration continues apace. While many are convinced, many others work on in the twilight of confusion and sometimes despair and disappointment. Much remains to be done both in terms of research on teaching and learning and also in terms of new community initiatives and policy renewal. The call for diversity in the expanding European Union could once again ignite a new flame of conviction regarding the value of this old and rich language.

NOTE

[1] An upsurge in the numbers studying Irish at 3rd level seems to have occurred in the 1994-'95 academic year. This change is to be welcomed.

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Review of Jonathan West, **Progressive Grammar of German. Volume 5: Words and their Constituents** and **Volume 6: The Lexicon and its Organization.**
Authentik Language Learning Resources Ltd, Trinity College Dublin, 1994.

Jennifer Ridley, *Trinity College Dublin.*

Volumes 5 and 6 are the last two in Jonathan West's *Progressive Grammar of German.* The earlier four are:
Volume 1: Authentic Texts and their Structures;
Volume 2: Sentences and their Realization;
Volume 3: Categories and their Exponents;
Volume 4: Particles and their Use.

Those who have read the first four volumes will be familar with the general theme of the series, which is the construct progressive grammar. As Eithne O'Connell points out in her review of volumes 1 and 2 in *Teanga 13,* progressive grammar is far removed from grammar in the traditional sense. Dr West sees grammar not only in terms of content but also in terms of an ongoing process in which teachers and learners can draw actively on linguistic theory. Thus in the first chapters of volumes 5 and 6 the term 'progressive' is defined as an approach to grammatical description and is also applied to learners who actively engage with learning materials. West states (p.3): "By performing authentic operations on authentic texts we build up a picture of how the language works; by investigating how speakers and writers produce and understand texts we develop strategies for interacting with texts and text producers ourselves2. Further, he suggests that the term 'progressive' implies a "cyclical approach to language learning", which involves the learner in working with various text types as part of the process of discovering and making inferences about the target language system and its usage. The emphasis on the learner learning by doing is a hallmark of learner autonomy, and in the first chapters of each volume West refers to the work of Little (1991).

Volumes 5 and 6 are concerned with aspects of lexis, and as such they reflect current research in the area of pedagogical grammar which focuses on the interrelationship of grammatical structures, words and their meanings and the various ways they are stored in the mental lexicon (cf. Odlin 1994).

The aims of volume 5 are set out on page 6. The first aim is to analyse the elements which go to make up words and to specify the relationships between them. The second is to make generalizations concerning these relationships and to speculate concerning new ones. The volume is structured in accordance with these aims. The reader is first taken through an analysis of the formal approach to nouns, adjectives and verbs, which provides information on their derivation and composition. Then the author takes us through a functional approach to word formation, where not only patterns of correspondence in word formation are observed but also semantic groupings are described. The final chapter suggests procedures for teachers to help learners to become aware of and to analyse word formations.

The scope of volume 5 is broad. The book is short - the text constitutes 89 pages - but it provides a detailed description of how words are formed together with several lists of specific examples. Although much of the terminology used is that of linguistic theory the terms are explained in a style of writing which is acccessible to teachers who do not necessarily use such terminology themselves. The suggested procedures in the final section are very briefly outlined. Teachers who wish to apply them in the classroom would generally need to refer back to chapters in the previous volumes which elaborate on the discovery processes involved when learners interact with authentic texts, and more specifically to *Authentik auf Deutsch* publications, from which the examples are taken.

Volume 6 sets out by defining the lexicon as a set of abstract lexemes. It goes on to expand this theme by showing, with numerous examples including reference to Middle High German, how the German lexicon is structured. The third chapter explores lexical structure in relation to language use, first by emphasizing the role of collocation, phraseology and background knowledge, and later by taking a sociolinguistic look at

aspects of variation. The final chapter, as before, discusses various ways that learners can benefit from applying knowledge of lexical relations to their own written and spoken German.

Clearly, volumes which are short in length and which address a wide range of issues need to strike a balance in terms of appropriate levels and lengths of discussion and explanation. While I find that volume 5 achieves a balance between theoretical analysis and aspects of language pedagogy - assuming that it is read in conjunction with the earlier volumes and not discretely - I am less sure about volume 6 in this regard. For example, the complex issues of syntagmatic/paradigmatic relationships is dealt with only very briefly (in chapter 1); in contrast, a much more detailed analysis is given (chapter 2) of synonyms and antonyms, both of which form the bread and butter of lexical knowledge and lexical building exercises among practising teachers.

The last point raises the question of the intended market. In the Forward to both volumes West states that they are "neither a grammar nor a handbook",; they merely seek to "highlight an agenda for discussion". He also makes the point that the series is for teachers of German who wish to have their teaching informed by aspects of linguistic theory. These two volumes appear to suit teachers of more advanced third-level learners. This is because many of the specific lexical structures referred to, and the inferences made about them, are sophisticated. At the same time many of the suggested procedures for learners to work with authentic texts are applicable to learners who are less advanced.

My one reservation about these volumes is that their complexity of range and purpose might run into the danger of falling among several stools, precisely because they are so wide in scope and because they are explicitly hybrid in nature. Thus their readership market might be small. However, their complexity and originality of approach is also their strength, and they are to be recommended to teachers of German who wish to gain more insight into aspects of linguistic theory and to supplement their teaching practices with various ways of looking at lexis which are based on extensive theoretical and empirical research.

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FOILSEACHÁIN IRAAL — IRAAL PUBLICATIONS

Introduction to IRAAL

The Irish Association for Applied Linguistics (IRAAL) was founded in 1975 in order to support research in applied and general linguistics in Ireland. It pursues this aim by organizing conferences, seminars, special lectures, and other events, as well as by a publications programme which includes **Teanga: The Irish Yearbook of Applied Linguistics** and special volumes on specific topics. Membership of IRAAL is open to all individuals and institutions with a professional and/or research interest in issues and problems which have to do with language. All correspondence regarding publications and membership should be addressed to The Secretary, IRAAL, c/o ITÉ, 31 Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin 2.

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Media Technologies and Language Learning

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Language Learning in Formal and Informal Contexts

D. Singleton and D. Little, eds.
(1984).
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Teanga has been published annually by IRAAL since 1979. Originally devoted exclusively to papers presented at IRAAL seminars, **Teanga** now includes the best of these papers, as well as book reviews and other contributions in applied linguistics. Most issues of **Teanga** are focused on a particular theme, although coverage of a range of issues is also maintained. **Teanga** is available free of charge as a benefit of IRAAL membership. Back issues and extra copies may be purchased separately. Stocks available are as follows.

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15 papers. Contents include 2 papers on language testing; 2 on the English language in Ireland; language development in deaf children; 2 papers on language remediation; error analysis of Irish learners of French; three papers on second language learning/teaching; and the status of linguistics in Ireland.

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